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A multicultural organization development examination of school-based change strategies to address the needs of gay youth.

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A MULTICULTURAL ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT EXAMINATION OF SCHOOL-BASED CHANGE STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF GAY YOUTH

A Dissertation Presented

by

MATHEW L. OUELLETT

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DEDICATION

Two adages frame my dedication of this study to my parents, my siblings. and my partner. The first one says that, "our parents are our first, and most important teacher." My parents, Mary Lou and Larry Ouellett, have been extraordinary ones. Their love and support has sustained our relationship through a range of challenges over the years. They are role models of life-long learning, respecting differences, risk-taking, and living lives that exemplify principles (like faith). Their ability to change and grow, and to support these behaviors in others, inspires me constantly. My own intellectual growth and commitment is a sort of hybrid of theirs. My passion for politics and social justice is rooted in my mother's belief that understanding one's world is best done through understanding how individuals and systems work. My commitment to working for social change is rooted in my father belief that ideas only become meaningful when coupled with action.

The second adage is the one that says, "you can pick your friends, but never your family members." Rene Barrett, Laure Ouellett, Lyn Clery, and Steve Ouellett have been sisters and brother of tremendous support to me. Growing up, many of the decisions I made affected their lives as well, especially in our high school experiences. They were unfailingly understanding and supportive of me. Sometimes, to my surprise, they were as proud of me as I was of them. Their spouses (Bill Barrett, Bob Clery, and Rachel Ouellett) and their children (Angela and Laura Barrett, James and Jason Rivera, Nicole, Samantha and Cassandra Clery, and Loretta, Sasha, and Garrett Ouellett) have only increased the love and joy in my life. In my case, I would pick all to be both family and friends.

Ron Parent's support to me during this process, and my life in general, has been all that anyone could hope. Ron has many graces, in this project his own love of teaching, and his seemingly genetic inability to waste time (or participate in anyone else's waste of time), helped me to keep my sight on the life that awaits for us beyond this process. For years, he has given repeatedly the gift of time to read, observe, reflect and write while building a home, a garden, and a social life full of elegance, beauty, and fun for both of us. For good measure, Ron brought the Parenti, the Nicewicz, and the Parent families with him too. Ron would only do it so completely and so rightly.

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While anonymous to the world, all of the participants in this study generously shared their time, experiences, and reflections on changes in their school district. Their contributions to this study, and to my better understanding of the application of multicultural education, multicultural organization development, and strategies to meet the needs of gay youth in public school-settings are on every page. I hope this study serves them well in future change efforts and evokes for readers their high professional standards, personal dedication, and genuine commitment to the best interests of all of their students.

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ABSTRACT

A MULTICULTURAL ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT EXAMINATION OF SCHOOL-BASED CHANGE STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF GAY YOUTH

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Today, increasingly attention has turned to the impact that school experiences have on gay youth. However, research to date has focused disproportionately on crisis intervention strategies or on meeting individually based needs rather than on the school setting. This study contributes an organization-wide examination of one public school district's efforts to address the needs of gay youth at the high school level. This study examines the role of this public school district Safe Schools Committee and their participation in the Massachusetts Department of Education Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Youth and assesses the impact these efforts have had on the overall school setting in relation to gay youth issues.

Two social justice change models provide the theoretical foundation for this study: multicultural education and multicultural organization development. The data for this study were gathered and analyzed using traditional qualitative research methods. Students, educators, parents, administrators, community members, and consultants at the

statewide level were asked to describe their perceptions of change in the high school. The four recommendations of the Massachusetts Department of Education Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students, the Stages of Multicultural Awareness model, and the Continuum of School Change Strategies provided useful perspectives in understanding how change initiatives impacted this school setting.

Factors important to the success of this school district's change initiatives were identified. The importance of prior experiences in creating a state of organizational readiness for change, the role of the Safe Schools Committee as a subsystem for change in the organization, and the importance of collaborative relationships across the organization, with community stakeholders, and with statewide resources and experts emerged as significant. Conclusions drawn from this study indicate that a systemic perspective can be critical in supporting school-based change efforts to meet the needs of gay youth and that addressing the needs of gay youth in school settings can make important contributions to increased multicultural awareness and organization development. Organization factors and behaviors of members of the Safe Schools Committee identified as particularly important to the success of these efforts are also presented.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The American public education system is charged with, among other responsibilities, the task of preparing the youth of our nation to lead productive, self-sufficient lives in our democratic society (Dewey, 1916). As public institutions, schools are crucial vehicles for handing down from generation to generation the dominant cultural values and beliefs of society (Katz, 1975). However, the task of defining and communicating the mission, goals, values, and priorities of public higher education in the United States has been a ceaselessly evolving, and often highly contentious, process. Since the inception of a nationwide public school system, many local, regional, and national resources have been directed towards the challenge of clarifying the agenda and strengthening the results of this system. One element of this process that has persisted over time is that as the norms, social expectations, and local constituencies within communities have changed, so have the goals and priorities of public education (Ware, 1994).

Policy makers, educators, and researchers have looked closely at dynamics inside and outside the classroom to understand what factors enhance student success, what teacher behaviors determine excellence, and how to better structure school organizations to support the priorities of the local community and the nation (Capper, 1993a; Capper, 1993b). A rich body of literature describes this broad spectrum of education reform efforts and many school-based initiatives address these issues today. One outgrowth of

this research is that more frequently than ever before, schools are called upon to address the social development needs, as well as academic goals, of students (Aviram, 1987; Brion-Meisels, 1982). Currently, programs address such topics as health (e.g., drug and alcohol abuse, teen pregnancy, smoking cessation, and sexually transmitted disease), gender role expectations (e.g., the access of girls to sports and to mentoring in the sciences), and social prejudice and racial tension (e.g., multicultural education and mediation skills training). These efforts span the spectrum of kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12) systems and range from the development of reading readiness programs to the development of health and physical fitness standards (Ware, 1994). In this same vein, communities have often turned to public schools for relief from two of the paramount social concerns of our day: racism and prejudice (Banks, 1994). Since the 1950s, proponents for education change efforts have called for the institution of strategies to address society-wide issues such as social injustice and inequity (Allen & Hutchinson, 1994; Gay, 1985; Grant & Sleeter, 1986; Hidalgo, McDowell & Siddle, 1990).

In this time period, efforts to acknowledge and address the increasing diversity of the United States in schools based upon, for example, race, language, gender, and physical ability are well covered in the popular and academic presses. Since the 1960s, American culture has also experienced an unprecedented shift in attitudes and values surrounding gender roles, sexuality, and sexual orientation for adults (Herdt, 1992; Herron, Kinter, Sollinger & Trubowitz, 1980; Homosexuality, 1982). However, gay youth remained a largely invisible minority as a group. Educators (and their professional organizations) generally ignored issues relating to gay youth until the mid-1980s, and remained virtually silent on school-based needs until the 1990s. A rare exception to this

was the work of Project 10, of the Los Angeles County School District. Project 10 created a program, under the auspices of the school district but outside of the mainstream setting, to encourage gay and lesbian youth to complete their high school education and to offer support in managing their social setting (Uribe, 1991).

Historically, researchers, social workers, medical, and counseling professionals have addressed the needs of only the most marginalized and at-risk of gay and lesbian youth, primarily from medical, corrections, and social work perspectives (Boyer, 1989; Breiner, 1985). For example, studies document the psychological and health risks faced by gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth often due to the lack of access to age appropriate and developmentally appropriate resources in their communities. This lack of access to age appropriate experiences can leave gay and lesbian youth particularly vulnerable to health issues. Recent studies have indicated that gay male youth may be particularly vulnerable to exposure to the transmission of HIV/AIDS, and lesbian teens may become pregnant to disguise their sexual orientation (Remafedi, 1990). Some studies suggest that issues of social isolation and alienation can lead to increased risks of academic failure, truancy, and under achievement (Walling, 1993). The psychological repercussions of isolation from appropriate resources and support can include depression, lack of intimacy with parents, and risk of becoming runaways (Savin-Williams, 1990). Not surprisingly, there is also substantially increased risk of substance and alcohol abuse (Whatley, 1992; Zera, 1992).

The 1989 publication of the "Report of the Secretary's Task Force on Youth Suicide" became a major turning point in how the needs of gay youth were conceptualized and articulated. This report demonstrated, in a compelling way, that

school years are especially difficult passages for many gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth (U.S. Congress, 1986). This report, distributed nationally, presented statistics on youth suicide that appeared to demonstrate conclusively that gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth are at significantly higher risk for medical problems, social isolation, violence (in the home and in public), and homelessness than their heterosexual peers (Gibson, 1989; Gonsiorek, 1988; U.S. Congress, 1986). Not surprisingly, these stresses often combine to put them, as a group, at significantly higher risk of suicide then their peers, as well (Gibson, 1989; Proctor & Groze, 1994).

The information contained in "Report of the Secretary's Task Force on Youth Suicide," alarmed educators, therapists, social workers, and concerned community activists in many communities. In part, they looked to their local school system for resources and direction in responding to these crises (U.S. Congress, 1986). As a result of this report, medical and counseling organizations, community-based gay and lesbian rights groups, and educational organizations heightened their efforts to address this crisis, as well (Herdt, 1989; Hetrick & Martin, 1987; Kissen, 1991; Uribe, 1991). Educators, researchers, administrators, parents, and community activists began to urge schools to grapple more openly and helpfully with the needs of gay and lesbian students in the school setting (Sears, 1991; Kissen, 1991; Walling, 1993). Consequently, research and practice-based efforts are emerging that draw from the fields of psychology, social work, education, and pediatric medicine to explore the impact that school settings have on the health and well being of gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth in general (Walling, 1993).

It should be noted that today many gay and lesbian youth, despite tremendous pressures, achieve success in school settings both academically and in extracurricular activities (like sports and clubs). They learn how to establish useful and relatively successful management strategies for their lives. More then ever before they are willing to present their needs to adults (such as school personnel) and have higher expectations than prior generations that support will be provided (Herdt & Boxer, 1993).

To date most school-based support mechanisms for gay youth have focused on meeting the individual needs of specific students or on changing heterosexist student and teacher attitudes, values, and behaviors to ones more respectful of gay youth. Efforts have been made to collect the stories of gay and lesbian students and teachers in order to better document, examine, and share their experiences in school settings (Due, 1995; Griffin, 1991; Kissen, 1996). Some teachers also have developed and implemented innovations in classroom based management strategies and curriculum design (McConnell-Celli, 1993). These latter innovations have been developed largely by individual teachers committed to better addressing the needs of gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth in the context of their own subject specialty. Additionally, it is becoming more common to find schools with some kind of student social group specifically organized to address gay and lesbian issues. However, little attention has been paid to the larger question of how each of these efforts, which are often stand-alone, relate to each other. To effectively reshape the culture, behaviors, and values of school organizations and their effectiveness in meeting the school-based needs of gay youth, just such a systemic perspective may be important to foster changes (Ouellett, 1996). A focus on meeting the needs of individuals, while caring and useful in the short run, can ultimately mean that the school system never "learns" or

changes in significant ways. For example, focusing always on the individual can lead to gaps or absences in that services and relationships of support must be renegotiated or reinvented with and by each new gay or lesbian who enters the school system. A focus on the experiences of individuals and on treating occurrences as unique events also acts to perpetuate an ahistorical position that, in effect, colludes with the heterosexism inherent in our culture. (Kitzinger, 1996) describes how heterosexism, as a system of beliefs and values, operates in our culture in a way that obscures what does not happen, as well as to reinforce what happens. Relying on individual gay and lesbian students to articulate their needs is problematic because it ignores the overwhelming factors that mitigate against most students being able or ready to do so. Most of the time it is not necessary to physically assault gays and lesbians to condition them into silence because "a climate of terror has been created instead in which most gay people voluntarily and of our own free will choose to stay silent and invisible" (Kitzinger, 1996, p. 11). And, finally, this focus leaves one vulnerable to a "psychologizing" interpretation of events and experiences in that any conflicts are chalked up to individual ineffectiveness and not as deriving from historically rooted social and political constructions (Kitzinger, 1996, p. 11). If the question of change at the institutional and community levels is left unaddressed, then even well intentioned efforts at change also become overly vulnerable to being swept away. For example, when charismatic leaders (students, teachers, administrators, or community activists) leave the school system or community, when conservative public opinion is overly valued, or if funding becomes strained.

In describing how schools might better address the needs of gay youth, Waller has said "...as a social organism the school shows an organism-like interdependence of its

parts; it is not possible to affect a part of it without affecting the whole" (Waller, 1961). The school organism, or organization, encompasses a school's curriculum, organization, culture, and climate. All are recognized as crucial factors in meeting community definitions and expectations of a broad education that includes social development. Across the nation there are examples of local, statewide, regional, and national efforts to reexamine and to improve the quality of the formal and informal educational experience offered to all youth. What is new in these efforts is the focus on addressing issues of social justice and equity (e.g., sexual orientation, gender, race, ethnicity, and religion) within the broad experience of school (Condon, 1986; Dalin, Rolff & Kleekamp, 1993; Darder, 1991).

Selected teacher organizations and some schools across the United States have developed and implemented efforts to address the school-based needs of gay youth. For example, national and regional teacher associations such as the National Education Association, Gay, Lesbian and Straight Educators Network, and Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development have all taken strong public stances in support of the inclusion of gay and lesbian youth issues. However, few of these initiatives are comprehensive enough or sufficiently structured to impact the school organization. A notable exception to these is the Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students developed by the Massachusetts Department of Education. The Department of Education began this initiative in 1993 to call the attention of teachers, administrators, students, and community members to the school-based needs of gay youth. The Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students is unique in that it is a statewide program that suggests a broad-based, perhaps even systemic, approach to meeting the needs of gay youth.

Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students

On February 10, 1992 then Governor William F. Weld signed an executive order establishing the nations first Governor's Commission on Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Youth. This was done in response to the 1989 publication of a federal report documenting the risk for suicide of adolescent gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth (U.S. Congress, 1986). The commission was charged with responding to the risks (physically, medically, psychologically, and spiritually) for gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth in Massachusetts. The commission began its work by collecting testimony of students, teachers, parents, administrators, and community members in five public hearings held across the state of Massachusetts in the fall of 1992. The testimony offered by participants about their experiences in many of the public high schools in Massachusetts formed the basis of the Education Report of the Governor's Commission on Gay, lesbian, and bisexual Youth published in February 1993 (Youth, 1993).

Placed under the auspices of the Department of Education, the "Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students" is a program designed to ensure that gay, and lesbian students are safe and supported in their schools. The Department of Education staff members work with schools locally to address the four key recommendations to schools which came out of the 1993 Education Report. The four recommendations were developed specifically to help schools comply with the goals of the Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students. They are:

1. develop policies protecting gay, lesbian, and bisexual students from harassment, violence, and discrimination

2. offer training to school personnel in violence prevention and suicide prevention

3. offer school-based support groups for gay, lesbian, and heterosexual students

4. offer school-based support groups for gay, lesbian, and heterosexual youth.

Since the inception of the program, 1,846 Massachusetts public schools have received information and/or training on gay, lesbian, and bisexual student issues and on strategies to make schools safer (Youth, 1993). On December 10, 1993 Massachusetts Governor William Weld signed into law an amendment to include discrimination based on sexual orientation to the act that prohibits discrimination against students in public schools. This law gave much needed legal leverage, as well as political sanction, to efforts to change public schools. Compliance with this law compelled schools to act immediately to protect gay, lesbian, and bisexual students from harassment, violence, and discrimination. These policies also supported students, administrators, and teachers in their efforts to develop school-based programs: for example, workshops to help prevent suicide, support and education groups for gay, lesbian, and bisexual students and their heterosexual allies, and school-based counseling for family members of gay, lesbian, and bisexual students. A recent survey showed that 330 public school districts in Massachusetts now have a written policy to protect gay, lesbian, and bisexual students against violence, harassment, or discrimination based on sexual orientation (Youth, 1997).

On a state level, the results from the 1995 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results confirm that gay, lesbian, and bisexual students continue to experience significant differences in the quality of school climate today (Education, 1996). For

example, 62% of gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth reported violence or threats at school compared with 37% reported by other students. Twenty percent reported they skipped school for fear of violence, compared to 4% of others; 66% reported being threatened/injured by a weapon at school compared with 28% of other students; and 35% reported suicide ideation or attempts compared with 9% of other students (Education, 1996).

Purpose of the Study

In this study, I endeavor to understand the change process in one high school participating in the Massachusetts Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students by examining the interrelationship of change efforts across the entire school setting. By describing, from a systemic perspective, how this school addressed changes I am able to identify organization factors and behaviors important to their success. What was learned in this descriptive case study may provide insight useful when other schools consider how to best address the needs of gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth.

The focus of this study is rooted in my experiences and training as a teacher, social justice activist, and education administrator. I have experienced first hand the challenges inherent in trying to enact social equity programs in a variety of education organization settings. I also know first hand the transformational power that can come from such programs when they work to enhance and extend an organization's attention to social justice and equity. Such efforts can have a profound impact on the quality of life of individuals, in addition to shaping the nature of the whole organization. However, the process of addressing issues of social diversity, social oppression, and justice in any

organization setting is emotionally demanding and threats of a retreat from the issues always loom nearby.

Significance of the Study

Kielwasser and Wolf (1994), in their study of the content of textbooks, point out that schooling exerts a formidable influence on the growth and development of youth in our society; the family and media being its only equals. It is, therefore, within public school systems that a rich opportunity often resides to address issues of social change and to have the broadest impact on the future of our society. A student population that is increasingly diverse by sexual orientation, ethnicity, and race deserves, and increasingly compels, our concern. In the 1990s, we have seen some strides in bringing the developmental, social, and academic needs of gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth to light as well as to address their school related challenges (Schaecher, 1989; Sears, 1991b). However, the task of changing schools is dauntingly complex (Katz, 1975). The amount of change that will be needed to be able to genuinely welcome gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth into the school setting is enormous.

Research on school-based initiatives to address the needs of gay, lesbian, and bisexual students has focused, to date, on crisis intervention. Efforts to address school based issues for gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth primarily have been initiatives that essentially "stand alone." For example, staff development workshops are usually one-time events, student support groups often operate in a vacuum, increased counseling services are oriented towards individuals, and access to community services is irregular at best. While useful in ameliorating a crisis or as support strategies for particular students, these

types of interventions act as topical (i.e., like issue specific "no-hitting" policies that do not address the underlying anti-gay motivations) or situational (i.e., particular issues directly related to particular people) initiatives. The greatest strength of strategies like these is that they can raise awareness levels and can have a limited impact by distributing some new, concrete information (Lipkin, 1994; Ouellett, 1996).

By examining systematic efforts across one school setting, this study provides much-needed research on the effects of broad-based interventions, versus "stand alone" or crises-oriented initiatives. To date, I know of no formal efforts dedicated to assessing the impact of such a change effort on the entire school organization. This study also provides a potentially useful method for understanding better how schools act as a site for other social change efforts, such as those related to gender roles, sexism, and racism.

Another significant contribution of this study is the effort to broaden the scope of discussion of gay youth in school settings to include the impact that heterosexism has on heterosexual youth, as well. Prior approaches, in both education practice and research, have consistently defined school-based issues as problems located within individual lesbian, gay, or bisexual students. This focus has perpetuated the perception that it is gay youth who "are the problem," as opposed to the attitudes and values of bias and prejudice often present in school settings. As such, interventions have continued to be designed that are essentially individualistic, and often one-time, efforts. This general failure to appreciate the impact that heterosexism has on both the overall school settings and on heterosexual youth and adults continues to veil the benefits that could be accrued by addressing heterosexism in the larger organizational context of schools for heterosexuals.

Theoretical Context for the Study

The theoretical context for this study draws from three streams of literature: the research on the psychosocial development of gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth; the research and practice-based literature on multicultural education; and the theoretical and practice-based literature of multicultural organization development. At first glance this may present a rather wide-ranging scope. However, each of these three streams of literature offers a unique analysis useful in school settings where people are engaged in responding to the needs of gay youth. There is already evidence of the need for increased systemic-level responses from schools in meeting the school-based needs of gay and lesbian youth (Ouellett, 1996). By such a broad scope of analysis we can better understood how schools might contribute even more effectively to the success of all their students, and in particular to gay youth.

Boundaries of the Study

The ability to generalize from a single case study is limited, especially when talking about organizations as individually unique as schools. My goal in this study has not been to seek out a specific "truth," but to do my best to accurately describe change efforts at one exemplar, Select High School. Other schools hold the promise of equally important insights into the impact the Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students on Massachusetts's schools.

A dilemma inherent in qualitative research design is the struggle to balance breadth with depth. I made every effort to seek out a range of perspectives within Select High School and across its community to better understand the work of the Safe Schools

Committee. However, I am certain that given more time and the opportunity, I would have been able to continue to deepen and broaden the scope of this study even further. However, a dissertation study is also a time-bound endeavor, and as such it can, at best, address the nature of what is studied only from the perspective of the particular point in time the study is conducted. The constantly evolving nature of communities, schools, and individual people is such that were this study to be conducted two years from now it is quite likely that the results would reflect differences.

Definition of Key Terms

There are terms used repeatedly through this study that a bear specific definition at the outset. For the purposes of this study, the term "gay youth" is used for the purposes of clarity and brevity to describe gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender youth collectively. In the context of this study, "transgender" is used to describe persons that conduct their lives on the margins or outside of generally prescribed gender role norm expectations. This term is used loosely in popular media as well as research literature most often to describe people who are not easily categorized by socially defined "male" or "female" roles. For example, choice in dress (e.g., androgynous dress, cross-dressers, or transvestites), physical comportment (e.g., "sissy" boys or especially masculine girls), or as a result of surgery (e.g., transsexuals like female-to-male surgery), or as simply as by self-identification. This term is important in the context of this study because it has been incorporated into the organization names of some high school peer-support groups as a symbolic invitation to peers who may not currently choose to be in, or fit in, any category. As an adaptation of a psychological diagnostic term, "homophobia" has had widespread use as a term to describe as irrational the fear or hatred of homosexuality. In general use,

this term has also come to refer to feelings of hatred, anger, and fear and to acts of violence directed at persons perceived to by gay, lesbian, or bisexual. It is important to distinguish between two similar terms in this study. The bookend to "homophobia" in this study is "heterosexism." As used here, it is defined as the political system of values, customs, and attitudes at the cultural and societal levels that act together to overwhelmingly support a cultural preference for heterosexuality. In this study I have tried to ease the work of the reader by linguistically delineating the school-based program efforts from those at the statewide level. For the sake of clarity, I have used the term "Safe Schools Committee" when referencing the committee at Select High School dedicated to developing and implementing school change goals. The term "Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students" refers to the official program, in the entirety, of the Massachusetts Department of Education. Lastly, the terms "system" and "system change" are used to refer to the school setting in totality. Rather than focusing on isolated components, or subgroups of people, it focuses on the school organization in its entirety. A "systems approach" is characterized by long-term (i.e., multi-year) intervention strategies and planned change efforts designed to impact the beliefs, the formal and informal policies, and the practices of the whole organization.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

Introduction

Within theories, models and practices of multicultural organization development and multicultural education there is much that can be learned about how to better address the school-based needs of gay, lesbian, and bisexual students. Multicultural education (MCE) theory and practice offer a contemporary model for school change that specifically addresses social justice and equity issues for students at the whole system level. For example, they recommend a systems level of analysis to reevaluate curriculum, pedagogy, school organization, and staff training and development (Banks, 1994; Nieto, 1992). The most fundamental value espoused by proponents of multicultural school change is that of providing an education to all children that is socially just and that responsibly addresses the variety of students' cultures and lives. Many schools have developed and changed in ways that successfully incorporate the tenets of MCE. While the literature and practices of the multicultural education movement do not currently address sexual orientation or the needs of gay and lesbian youth directly in any substantial way, there is certainly the potential for the kind of expansion and inclusion necessary to do so.

To understand how schools develop and change at a systemic level, one important effort has been the application of organization development theory and practice to school systems (Baldridge & Deal, 1983). An organization development perspective on school change includes in its analysis the formal curriculum and such factors as classroom social interactions, school management, and school climate (Bennis, 1969; Fullan, 1987).

Multicultural organization development is anchored to organization development theories, models, and practices developed for use in the business sector. What is different is that it directly extends these practices to address social justice and equity issues as primary goals of organization development efforts. Multicultural organization development offers a theoretical framework for analysis as well as practice-based strategies for promoting change within the context of an organization such as a school (Jackson & Holvino, 1988).

Linkage between the incorporation of the theories and models of multicultural education and multicultural organization development and efforts to address the school-based needs of gay, lesbian, and bisexual students are only at the beginning. While schools are just beginning to grapple with the needs of gay youth, the multicultural education movement provides a vibrant model in which social justice and equity goals have been directly embedded in school change initiatives. The models and practices of multicultural organization development offer useful tools for assessing progress and for designing appropriate interventions that move organizations forward towards being more socially just and inclusive ones.

In the 1960s and 1970s education research began to explore questions related to understanding the factors that contribute to student success, beyond the traditional research preoccupation with policy or curriculum innovations. For example, the research of Coleman (1961) illuminated how the formal, articulated academic curriculum in the school is juxtaposed with an equally important informal curriculum. Coleman's research described how this informal curriculum, learning based in peer social relationships, takes

place outside of the domain of formal curriculum and teacher supervised activities. For example, this and other studies demonstrated that peer relationships are highly important in defining the context and culture of the formal, public experience of education (Cusick, 1973; Iannaccone, 1964; Sarason & Klaber, 1985; Wilson & Rossman, 1993; Wilson & Rossman, 1994). Not surprisingly, researchers also found that many of the attitudes, opinions, and values manifested in the informal curriculum of schools are reflective of institutionalized and culturally embedded values. These norms are enacted in schools in both formal and informal ways (Charters, 1964; Clift, Holland & Veal, 1990; Coleman, 1961; Prestine & Bowen, 1993).

The impact of the informal curriculum on the school experiences of all youth remains an especially salient question for researchers, policy makers, administrators, and educators today. Our public schools reflect the rapidly increasing diversity of United States society and, as such, must develop effective and flexible skills, techniques, and methods for addressing the increasingly complex social context of schooling. One group that has been consistently excluded from the research and practice-based dialogues on school change are gay and lesbian youth. While there are some signs that this is beginning to change, much remains to be done. For example, there have been recent efforts made to collect the individual stories of gay and lesbian students, teachers, and parents about their experiences in school settings (Due, 1995; Griffin, 1995; Kissen, 1997). Some effort has also been made to examine typical strategies being used in school settings to address the needs of gay youth in an effort to understand both the range of resources being offered and their relationship to each other (Ouellett, 1996). Most of these strategies remain largely geared towards understanding individual-based needs and services. To date, little

research has been collected on the manner in which school-wide change efforts might be usefully directed to address the school-based needs of gay and lesbian youth.

The multicultural education (MCE) movement has the potential to offer much to those involved in initiatives directed at meeting the needs of gay and lesbian youth. Over the 1980s and 1990s, MCE proponents have launched education change initiatives at every level of the K-12 system designed to increase social justice and equity in school settings for groups traditionally undervalued and under-supported.

I propose that the theoretical foundations and many of the practices of multicultural education efforts provide important models for informing school change processes that aim to address the school-based needs of gay and lesbian youth. For example, both initiatives require a shift in paradigm so that the emotional and cognitive components of the learning process are acknowledged and encompassed in change processes. They also both require a transformation of the underlying values expressed in as well as the content of curriculum materials, and may require innovations in pedagogy and teacher development, as well as systemic changes in school climate and organization. Each of these initiatives speaks directly to inclusion and support of egalitarian values important in broader community life. And they both require the creation of new roles for community leaders and social advocates that directly involve them in developing, implementing, and evaluating school change efforts. Additionally, the principles of multicultural organization development (making organizations equitable and socially just) have much to offer in understanding the challenges of making school organizations more socially just and equitable as well. Multicultural organization development (MCOD)

offers systemic organization change models that directly address social justice and equity issues in context of the growth and development of organizations (Gunn, 1991; Holvino, 1988; Jackson & Holvino, 1988; Johnson, 1992). Multicultural organization development strongly calls for greater community, pluralism, respect and dignity of the individual and social action for equity and justice (Camino, 1995; Jackson & Hardiman, 1994). The nature of school changes called for by students, teachers, parents, administrators, and community leaders participating in the Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students requires the acumen and innovation very similar to that called for by multicultural organization development.

The selection of three topics for this literature review suggests a need to harness a considerable scope of theoretical and practice-based literature. In fact, it is my goal to offer a synthesis that acknowledges and bridges important models and contributions available within the domain of each of these three areas. By bringing together these three arenas in an integrated, selective manner this review offers a textured and theoretically complex foundation for the study. Based upon the model of an integrative literature review suggested by Cooper (1988), I will selectively address the literature on gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth and their needs in the context of schools; the literature on the multicultural education movement; and important theories and concepts of multicultural organization development.

Gay Youth and School Change

Since the 1960s, significant legislative and social changes have occurred which have dramatically impacted the way that gays, lesbians, and bisexuals are viewed within

American culture. Currently, ten states (e.g., Massachusetts, New Jersey, Wisconsin, Hawaii, Vermont, Minnesota, and Rhode Island) have adopted some type of statewide anti-discrimination statutes protecting gays, lesbians, and bisexuals from some forms of discrimination. Additionally, numerous towns and cities have enacted community level legislation that prohibits discrimination. To date, three states have enacted students rights laws (Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island) designed to improve the safety of school settings and provide protection for LGB youth from the kinds of violence, harassment, and discrimination that impede their success in school. These are remarkable feats that remained unimaginable until recently. Another important indicator of social change is that most national K12 education organizations have passed declarations of support for gay, lesbian, and bisexual students (Sears, 1991b; Sears, 1994). This includes such important professional organizations as the National Educational Association, the American Federation of Teachers, and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

These shifts in policy have been mirrored by the efforts of researchers and practitioners to develop a variety of school-based strategies for addressing heterosexism and homophobia in school settings (Ouellett, 1996). A review of the current research and practice-based literature indicates four areas as key points of entry for addressing school change. These areas are teacher and administrator training, addressing school climate issues, changes to curriculum, and the development and implementation of new roles for community advocates.

Teacher and Administrator Training

Research and practice demonstrate that teachers and administrators must lead the way as role models and leaders if significant changes are to take root in schools. Teacher and administrator training includes providing opportunities for adults to examine and reflect upon their own values and attitudes towards gays and lesbians, acquiring accurate information about gay issues, and the receiving of on-going encouragement and coaching in efforts to acknowledge and address the needs of gay and lesbian students. Lipkin (1994) suggests that teachers should be able to demonstrate a degree of familiarity with the issues and the skill to incorporate this into teaching. Teachers should be able to demonstrate the ability to respond in accurate and nonjudgmental ways to questions about homosexuality; be comfortable in confronting homophobic remarks in and out of the classroom setting. Additionally, they should be able to demonstrate the use of appropriate and inclusive language, and the ability to include gay and lesbian issues in all discussions of diversity. The administrative and teaching staff must support the provision of in-school services, such as gay affirmative counseling, library resources, and support groups, outreach programs and all-school task forces to confront homophobic harassment and violence. In addition, school policies, manuals, hiring practices, and disciplinary codes must be updated to specifically reflect nondiscrimination policies (Lipkin, 1990; Walling, 1993).

Some research has shown that many education professionals hold homophobic feelings reflecting the values and norms of the broader society (Butler, 1994). This is not unexpected given the prevailing socialization, values, and norms most of us are raised to believe. There are currently available models useful in understanding how to construct

just such efforts. For example, in the early 1980s when mandated efforts were first implemented to address ethnicity, race, and gender in schools, training was proposed and implemented focused on educators' social responsibility to provide an environment that supported the ability of all students regardless of race, ethnicity, or gender. Unfortunately, it is still the rare teacher education program that offers accurate information or training about homosexuality, or the needs of gay youth. Therefore, even the avenues available within teacher education settings frequently fail to counter the stereotypes, misinformation, and prejudices with which many pre-service teachers were raised.

Teachers and administrators can be trained sufficiently to allow schools to move forward in meeting the needs of gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth and to create school environments free from physical and psychological abuse (Baber, 1993; Dutile, 1986; Reis, 1989; Sears, 1987). Most researchers suggest that the first step of intervention in school settings is teacher and administrator education that encourages reflection on one's own values and attitudes (Friend, 1993b; Hunter & Schaecher, 1987; Lipkin, 1994). Many schools have found that staff development is one important avenue for addressing the values and attitudes of teachers and administrators. There are many models available for creating a staff development sequence on equity themes including gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth issues (Friend, 1993a; Lipkin, 1990; Schaecher, 1989). Often the initial goal of staff development efforts is an attempt to increase the understanding that ethics demand "...sensitivity to individual differences is both fundamental and professional..." (Uribe & Harbeck, 1991 p. 9). The most successful interventions to educate teachers and administrators have been those which combined both affective and cognitive strategies. Affective approaches tend to focus on feelings, emotions, and attitudes with strategies

like speaker panels, role-plays and simulation. Cognitive strategies focus more on the acquisition of knowledge such as lectures, discussions, and readings (Butler, 1994).

It is helpful to demonstrate the interconnections of all forms of oppression when trying to encourage attention to homophobia and heterosexism. It is especially important to explore how allowing one form of oppression (e.g., sexism, racism, or heterosexism) to pass with out confrontation is to leave the door open for all forms to manifest themselves. For example, homophobia is also a key factor in the support of stereotyped, rigid gender sex roles (Pharr, 1988). At the same time, based upon over ten years of experience in conducting equity workshops for teachers and administrators, Friend (1993) cautions that absolute correlation's between forms of oppression (or "-isms") can not always be simply drawn:

> "Homophobia and racism are not identical. Yet the nature of oppression has many elements in common across "isms," which, when understood, allow persons of one target group to transfer their lived experience of oppression and gain an empathic appreciation of others' experiences which they have not lived" (Friend, 1993a, p. 65).

There are some ways in which addressing gay issues in the school setting provides unique and difficult issues for educators. First, there is the invisibility of gays in general as a group of people. There is often extreme emotionality associated with discussions of gays and gay issues (especially when in relationship to youth). Often, there is fear of objections to these discussions taking place from members of the community based upon their religious, moral and political beliefs. Less obviously, there is in general a lack of preparation on the part of most educators to effectively facilitate a worthwhile educational discussion (i.e., accurate, fair, and informative) on gay and lesbian issues. It is even more

unlikely that one may find an openly gay or lesbian teacher or administrator on staff willing to co-facilitate such a discussion. There also is a risk that a discussion of gay issues, if not handled carefully, may result in some people (or groups) who experience inequity in society to be confused and angered by the inclusion of gay issues in discussions of multiculturalism. Each and all of these factors compound the difficulties inherent in efforts to bring about change (Walling, 1993).

Heterosexism in school settings, socially-induced anxiety many gay adults feel about being around youth and children, and fears connected with being public about their sexual orientation effectively neutralize the most natural resource for gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth in schools: lesbian and gay adults. Most gay teachers are forced to use intricate strategies to protect their own status in the school building so are often extremely hesitant to either "come out" themselves or to appear too solicitous or supportive of gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth and rights (Griffin, 1991; Woog, 1995). Another unique attribute of including gay issues in secondary school settings is that all teachers can generally expect questions to arise in relationship to this area that probably would not in any others. Lipkin (1994) points out, for example,

> "because of the pervasiveness of homophobia in our country and the accurate perception that gay people are the most active in the struggle against it, one who repeatedly defends gays is assumed to be homosexual." (Lipkin, 1994, p. 100).

Lipkin goes on to suggest any teacher bringing gay issues into the classroom needs to be prepared to answer questions about their own sexuality, to answer basic questions about gays and homosexuality, and be able to point out features that all oppression have in common (Lipkin, 1994, p. 100). Self-acceptance and assurance are

important attributes for teachers undertaking gay and lesbian issues in school settings. Mayer (1990) has examined one important characteristic of teacher effectiveness — acceptance of self and acceptance of others — and found that gay teachers exhibited no differences from heterosexual respondents on the personality inventories. In addition, (Knowles 1997) found that the participation of lesbian and gay teachers in activities offered in schools participating in the Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students was largely possible because they had first resolved their own identity issues and resolved to be "out" publicly (Knowles, 1997).

The stakes remain extraordinary, however, for gay and lesbian teachers. Harbeck (1997) in an extensive review of case law related to employment of gay teachers notes that until very recently being identified as gay could easily lead to a summary dismissal from one's teaching position. The National Education Association amended its nondiscrimination clause in 1974 to include sexual orientation, and has actively funded litigation efforts, and there continues to be more support and protection for the rights of gay and lesbian teachers available now than ever before. However, the risk of loss of employment is still quite real for teachers simply because they may be gay or lesbian.

The research literature on gay youth suggests that they can "come out" to and be helped by any adult that is caring. It does not say that it is only helpful to gay youth to come out to gay adults or teachers. This is good news: many teachers have the potential to provide services of enormous value to gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth, if they chose to do so. However, current research does indicate that few students typically choose teachers to look to for support or to confide in about their gay sexuality (Kissen, 1991; Sears,

1989). It is possible that as teachers become more sensitive as to how to cue gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth that they are adults who would be both receptive and respectful of a disclosure, more will experience the trust and confidence of students.

Increasingly, students and their families are resorting to the legal system in efforts to impress upon administrators, teachers, and school boards the need to protect all youth from anti-gay harassment and violence. A precedent setting case came in 1996 in the State of Wisconsin when Jaimie Nabozny won a $900,00.00 dollar settlement against his school district for permitting harassment to continue against him. School districts are now taking particular notice of the expensive nature of messages that are sent through the legal system can have for districts that fail to act seriously to stop the violence directed against youths perceived to be gay or lesbian. Since the Wisconsin settlement, similar lawsuits have been filed in New Jersey, Washington, and California.

School Climate

The secondary school setting presents youth, gay and heterosexual alike, with both formal and informal messages about sexuality, sexual orientation, gender role norms, and the concomitant cultural and community values and expectations. It is often the adults in the school setting (e.g., teachers, administrators, specialists, service providers) who set the norms and expectations for acceptable attitudes and behaviors; especially as they relate to factors of inclusion and respect for differences (Reed, 1992; Reed, 1994). Educators and researchers have been explicitly clear that the baseline support gay youth require in secondary school settings is, first and foremost, a climate of safety. Action to

stop all levels of abuse (e.g., name-calling, bullying, and fighting) from peers and adults is an essential predicate for any other interventions.

Attention to issues of school climate must also address both heterosexist and homophobic activity at the school and individual levels. This may include raising awareness of behaviors (e.g., name calling, physical violence, and harassment) and by addressing issues of gender and sexuality development (e.g., efforts to acknowledge and meet the needs of heterosexual, gay, lesbian, and bisexual students for accurate and timely information about sexuality). There have been some specific measures suggested by practitioners and researchers for specific secondary school personnel such as counselors. For example, Benvenuti (1986) has called upon school counseling programs to break an "attitude of silence" about issues of gay, lesbian, and bisexual students on their case loads. She recommends that counselors begin by becoming aware of (and working towards resolution of) their own feelings and homophobic biases. Next, Benvenuti recommends schools train counselors so that program content and therapeutic decisions reflect values and ethics that are clearly directed to meeting the needs of gay, lesbian and bisexual students. In the same vein, Krysiak warns counselors against perpetuating assumptions that the whole world is heterosexual or trying to impose on adolescents an "inappropriate heterosexual bias" (Krysiak, 1987, p. 305).

These calls seem particularly important in light of the findings of Sears (1992) that some gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth perceive school counselors and teachers as ill-informed and unconcerned, detached from students' personal concerns, reluctant to discuss issues, and likely to respond to racial slurs but not to homophobic slurs. These

perceptions gain even greater weight when juxtaposed with recent findings on counselor perceptions of gay students (Powell, 1987; Price & Telljohann, 1991). Price and Telljohann (1991) found that most counselors underestimate the prevalence of gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth and as many as one in five counselors report that counseling a gay student concerning gay issues would not be "professionally gratifying" (partially because they did not feel very competent in doing so). In this same study, forty one percent of the respondents believed that schools are not doing enough to help gay students adjust, and a quarter also felt that teachers seem to exhibit significant prejudice toward gay students. Kissen (1991) has called upon all teachers to understand that speaking and acting against heterosexism in schools is essential. She notes that this,

> "…sends a message to all students that who they are does not depend on who they love, any more than it depends on whether they are rich or poor, white or brown, able-bodied or disabled." (Kissen, 1991, p. 3).

Students, as well, can be coached and helped to change. For example, Lipkin (1994) suggests if the name-calling rule can be

> "…contextualized within a discussion in which gay/lesbian people are given their humanity and misperceptions are challenged, tolerance may be internalized and practiced beyond the school house walls." (Lipkin, 1994, p. 99).

Finally, Ouellett (1996) proposes a continuum to describe how the most commonly used school interventions (e.g., student groups, teacher awareness training, library resources) act in relationship to each other to change the overall school environment. Clearly, the preponderance of services offered by most schools today reflects the perception that gay and lesbian issues are individual, anomalous, and generally beyond the scope or duty of the school. When necessary, schools may focus

resources on individual social adjustment and support strategies such as offering counseling services to gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth support and sometimes family counseling. In relationship to administrators and teachers, gay and lesbian youth perceive that at best they may be able to find a sympathetic teacher or two with whom to talk most often (English teachers). These adults might be referred to as a "trusted other" in the school setting who listens confidentially to students, may offer referrals to other selected adults, and offers supportive advice. Some schools offer more public interventions such as Gay/Straight Alliances that are available to provide peer-based support. While these interventions may address the most immediate needs for support and safety of gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth, they also add directly to the quality of life of heterosexual students as well. In the absence of interventions, homophobia and heterosexism act together to hold in place rigidified conservative values about acceptable and unacceptable behaviors for men and women such as those that go against the grain of gender role expectations (Jung & Smith, 1993; Pharr, 1988; Reed, 1994).

More recently, attention has been paid to the specific ways in which heterosexism negatively affects heterosexual as well as gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth. Reis (1989) noted how the residual effects of a climate of hate affect the educational environment of heterosexual students. For example, misinformation and stereotypes about sexuality negatively affect heterosexual youth by adding anxiety to the climate about all expressions of sexuality for them. Fear of being considered gay can drive heterosexual students to embrace prematurely narrowed definitions of themselves, as well as to engage in behaviors they may be emotionally under prepared for later (Grayson, 1987). Many of these narrowed views, attitudes, and values are widely reinforced by parents, relatives, the

media, and peers. For school-aged youth, to follow these foreclosed attitudes and values toward gender roles and sexual orientation may deny them full access to their whole selves, their creativity, individuality and uniqueness whether homosexual or heterosexual (Reed, 1994). MacDonald & Games (1974) have shown that people with negative attitudes toward homosexuality often also hold related attitudes condoning the inequality of women. Lipkin (1994) asserts that heterosexual students gain from letting go of the debilitating burden of carrying around hatred, allowing minds, closed or limited in outlook, to grow a more inclusive understanding of the human experience, and ultimately to gain a better understanding and acceptance of their own sexuality. Therefore, the benefits accrued directly to heterosexuals in the community underscore a compelling argument for including issues of gays in all anti-prejudice interventions.

Curriculum Change

On top of the general symbolic invisibility of gays in the daily life of most schools, there is also a complete dearth of relevant, age appropriate curricula to address gay issues honestly and openly. Advocacy of curriculum change is perhaps the center of the firestorm of efforts to bring prosocial messages about gays and lesbians to adolescents. It is often seen as "too explosive" or "too political" to undertake, even by clearly heterosexually identified allies. For all of the aforementioned reasons, curricular revisions can be interventions of the highest risk to undertake. However, highly important gains can also be made in addressing the needs of gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth through curriculum revision. As it stands, the scope and depth of what information is likely to be presented about gay, lesbian, and bisexual issues in most secondary schools is generally "censored, inaccurate or blatantly homophobic" (Anderson, 1994, p. 15).

Substantive curriculum innovation should include, for example, efforts to honestly, accurately, and positively address gay issues in age and curriculum appropriate ways in classes (Griffin, 1994; Lipkin, 1994; Sears, 1991a; Treadway & Yoakam, 1992; Uribe & Harbeck, 1991).

The integration of gay issues into the curriculum offers the opportunity for meaningful, comprehensive change in a secondary school setting equivalent to the importance of changing the attitudes and values of the members of the school system (Lipkin, 1994; Uribe, 1991; Walling, 1993). How change of this nature is implemented can be defined in greatly varying ways. For example, one strategy of curriculum change would be to incorporate gay-positive materials (that are both age and subject appropriate) into the regular course of readings and open discussions in the classroom. Lipkin suggests that some discipline-specific curriculum, such as that of health education, social studies, and literature classes, can work immediately to change curriculum content (Lipkin, 1994, p. 101). Over time, and with some preparation, age appropriate and curriculum specific references to gays and lesbians can be infused into most classes. "It requires early intervention, conscientious curriculum change, programmatic staff development, and student support" (Lipkin, 1994, p. 95).

The information available in textbooks offers another example of how heterosexism plays out in the curriculum in secondary school settings and illustrates where change is needed. School textbooks (e.g., family studies, history, literature, and writing, library resources, textbook resources) provides an exemplar of how harsh censorship deliberately excludes useful and available information about gays and lesbians

(Kielwasser & Wolf, 1994; Whatley, 1992). Kielwasser and Wolf (1994) have examined school health, social studies and history textbooks to examine the nature of representation of images of gays and lesbians. In their findings, if any mention is made at all, it is highly prejudicial, confirms stereotypes, and perpetuates misconceptions (Kielwasser & Wolf, 1994). While Whatley (1992) finds an improvement in the representation of some gays and lesbians in sexuality and health textbooks specifically, the depictions are narrow and ghettoized (i.e., chiefly white, able-bodied, and young gay men). Both of these research studies note systematic failure to include examples of gay issues and the important activities of the gay community. The implication of the apparently deliberate oversight of important democratic and civil rights activism in the curriculum of social studies, history, and sociology texts, can best be understood as overt examples of censorship. It seems hard to believe that there could be no mention, whatsoever, that in the last two decades there have seen three Marches on Washington calling for civil rights for lesbians and gays (1979, 1987, and 1993). As well, there have been many efforts at local and state levels to provide civil protection for gays and lesbians. These movements are vital, contemporary and often locally important examples of democracy in action, even if they fail to make it into the classroom.

On an individual level, teachers and counselors have been advised to acquaint themselves with adolescent-oriented literature appropriate to gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth issues as another form of support. This is often referred to as "bibliotherapy." Literature and novels can be excellent tools for helping students to explore their own anxieties and questions by vicariously examining the lives of other teens through novels that address a character's sexuality (Hipple, Yarbrough & Kaplan, 1990; Kissen, 1991).

The three areas that have most often been targeted for school change initiatives have included teacher and administrator staff development and training, interventions to improve school climates (especially around safety and harassment issues), and strategies useful in curriculum changes. These each present useful points of entry; however. there are several cautionary notes to be made here. Interventions such as these continue to place the context of gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth issues at the individual level. This perspective can act to mask or to deny the larger cultural and institutional contexts that schools operate within by evading the issue of a systemic approach to stopping heterosexism. By focusing solely on individual interventions, which essentially name the particular person as having the "problem" to be solved, we miss a better opportunity to place the onus of responsibility onto the shoulders of those people who act upon homophobic or heterosexist emotions or beliefs (Blumenfeld, 1992).

However dim the sound, there are calls for change (Harbeck, 1992; Unks, 1994; Woog, 1995). The American School Health Association recently adopted a resolution on gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth essentially advocating that sexual orientation should be addressed in the sexuality component of health education (Telljohann & Rice, 1993). Models for inclusive, age appropriate health education instruction have been developed which include accurate, unbiased information about sexual orientation (Brion-Meisels, 1982). This is a start; however, ideally, gay and lesbian issues would be addressed throughout the entire health education curriculum. Limitation of discussion to components on sexuality further reinforces stereotypes that define being gay or lesbian as essentially a matter of sexual behaviors.

Researchers have also developed some general pedagogical suggestions applicable to most any discipline or subject. These suggestions include portraying gay, lesbian, and bisexuals matter-of-factly; using neutral language to describe lesbians and gays; identifying lesbians and gays of accomplishment; and identifying sexual orientation (as appropriate) when connected with a person's contribution in music, art, literature, math, athletics and science (Schwartz, 1994). Gordon (1983) has developed a lesson plan on name-calling specifically age appropriate for middle school children. Gordon focuses on name-calling because it so often is based upon the bigotry learned from adults and calls upon children's naturally strong sense of social justice to change what they think about homophobic name-calling. Another example would be the video, "It's Elementary." The video offers examples of teachers, across the entire first grade through twelfth grade span, modeling the inclusion of gay and lesbian themes in age-appropriate, meaningful ways in the curriculum.

Role of Communities

Much like other efforts to secure civil rights for minority groups, the implementation of change that promises to offer greater social justice and equity in schools is often leveraged against struggles in the broader environment. Often, in the past the result of such community-based conflicts has been a surrendering of efforts to reach out to gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth in school settings. A sharp example of this kind of environmental interaction occurred in April 1993, when Governor Carlson, the Governor of Minnesota signed into law a bill that would make it illegal to discriminate against gays and lesbians in housing, employment, and other services. However, a provision of getting this bill passed was to include, in the law, a prohibition against teaching about

homosexuality in Minnesota's public schools. This same law also specifically allows gays and lesbians to be discriminated against as employees and volunteers of organizations such as the Girl Scouts or Boy Scouts (Halvorsen, 1993).

A particular attribute of contemporary school change efforts related to gay youth has been the often pivotal role played by community groups and national advocacy organizations. Strong efforts have emerged from both anti-gay and pro-gay national organizations in the struggle to define school-based issues and to influence the implementation of policies at the local, schoolboard level.

Over the past decade, the politically conservative "right wing" and the fundamentalist Christian Coalition movement have combined efforts, resources, and agendas to gain tremendous political clout. By weaving together conservative political goals with fundamentalist religious beliefs and attitudes, they have produced an array of individuals and organizations that have been aggressive advocates for excluding lesbian and gay issues from school settings. These groups, such as the Traditional Values Coalition headed by Lou Sheldon, the Family Research Council, and the Concerned Women for America often support such efforts as direct mail fund-raising solicitations, anti-gay media events, and constituent pressure campaigns directed at public officials. Their efforts, on both national and local levels, have ranged from galvanizing politically conservative candidates to seek seats on school boards to the advising, organizing, and funding of ostensibly community-based campaigns against the inclusion of lesbian and gay-related issues in schools. Similar groups' efforts supported production and distribution of anti-gay public relations "education" materials (e.g., the anti-gay video

"The Gay Agenda") as well as orchestrated attacks on efforts to liberalize the content of health education curriculum (e.g., to address sexual orientation or abortion issues). In particular, they have focused efforts on influencing locally based efforts to define gay and lesbian issues in schools as "enforced political correctness," a matter of immorality, or as a matter of "parents' rights." These organizations often bring to bear considerable political, financial, and legal resources that can act to overwhelm processes in local school settings.

Such groups wield important influence, such as that demonstrated by the efforts of evangelist Pat Robertson's American Center for Law and Justice. In one recent example, Robertson's group funded, and publicly staged, the efforts of the parents of a high school student in Chesterton, Indiana to force a teacher to remove a poster from her classroom. The parents protested the poster, even though it had been hanging in the same spot for six years unnoticed, because it depicted famous lesbian and gay historical figures with a caption that read: "Unfortunately, history has set the record a little too straight. Assume that all important contributions are made by heterosexuals, and you're not only thinking straight, but narrow." Ultimately, all appeals within the school system to have the poster removed failed. However, based on funding from Robertson's American Center for Law and Justice, a lawsuit was launched in county court on behalf of parent Cathy Podguski against the Duneland School Board and teacher Bonnie Leckie. The suit laid claim that Leckie used her position to promote a political philosophy, and that the poster itself violates both district and state guidelines by failing to present a "balanced" viewpoint on sexuality. While this case was decided in favor of Leckie initially, already appeals are under way. Often, the threat of just such protracted legal entanglements and the

extraordinary expenses that are concurrently incurred to the school district to fight such efforts act to dissuade less staunch administrators from taking such a stance in favor of inclusion of gay issues.

Organizations such as the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) and Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (P-FLAG) are two examples of pro-lesbian and gay national organizations that make comparably strong, national and local efforts to support the fight against anti-gay bias and heterosexism in schools.

GLSEN, founded in Boston in 1990 and headquartered in New York City since 1995, has already built a network of over forty local chapters. As a national organization, it is dedicated to bringing together gay and straight teachers, parents, students, and concerned citizens in order to end homophobia in schools. GLSEN hosts regional and national education conferences, publishes education materials and resources, and sponsors annual student leadership training (GLSEN, 1998). GLSEN's organization efforts target three key areas: in-school programming (e.g., staff training materials, videos, and resources for sponsoring student groups), advocacy (e.g., working with administrators, policy makers, and officials to change attitudes, policies, and procedures), and community organizing (e.g., local chapters that support grass-roots efforts at creating change). Their regional and national conferences, direct mail education campaigns, and coalitions with other organizations (like the Human Rights Campaign) have had tremendous impact in supporting local school-based change efforts. Due to its national visibility, GLSEN has been particularly effective in efforts to respond, effectively and in a timely manner, in national media-based forums to challenges raised from the Right Wing

and Christian Coalition caucuses. Both GLSEN and P-FLAG have worked to establish the needs of gay youth in school settings in the context of such core values as the creation of schools that are safe for all students. In stressing the difference between supporting gay and lesbian youth and promoting homosexuality, these organizations (and others like them) have been able to help school administrators, teachers, and community members embrace the needs of gay youth as similar to other efforts to end intolerance. A central tenet in the efforts of organizations like GLSEN is that changes that address issues of social justice and equity for gay youth ultimately benefit all members of school setting.

There is a more subtle and on-going tension between the anti-gay and pro-gay positions outlined above which is also linked to efforts to make schools more multiculturally inclusive and socially just ones. Freire (1989, 1990) points out that there is a risk of a deeply problematic lack of integrity when espoused values are contradicted by lived experiences. This is just what transpires in many schools and communities that take great pride in a self-image, and rhetorical expressions, of egalitarian values (e.g., "everybody in this school is treated equally"). However, these same schools and communities, when they allow the perpetuation of heterosexist and homophobic climates in schools, set up situations in which the lived experience of students directly contradicts these values (e.g., students witness, or personally experience, name-calling or being beaten up based upon perceptions of differentness). Efforts to change secondary schools must respect and support the needs of all youth, and especially marginalized and excluded youth like lesbians and gays. To do this, efforts must build upon, and be allied with, related efforts to improve the equity and socially just nature of the entire education setting for all members of the community. For example, the platform, goals, and strategic

interventions currently being advocated nationally by the multicultural education movement in America also call for a whole system change. Additionally, an analysis informed by the principles of multicultural organization development takes into consideration the relationship of the school and its environment.

Multicultural Education Movement

Public education holds the challenging position in United States society of acting as a principal facilitator of many dialogues that reflect serious social concerns at a national level. As such, public education is seen as able to influence issues that are often community, statewide, and national priorities. Therefore, many different political, legal, moral, social, and theoretical lenses reflecting the priorities of the day have been brought to bear on the issues of the nature and content of the national public education agenda. After years of debate, negotiation, interventions and mediations, discussion of public education acts naturally as a lightening rod for other, larger issues we are most at sea about as a culture. Today, manifestations of oppression, such as racism, sexism, and heterosexism, in our society are issues that we look to public education to address.

Efforts to address racism in the culture of the United States are widespread and diverse. However, public education is charged with a particularly strong historical mandate to respond to the gap between our espoused cultural values and the lived experiences of most citizens. This is especially true in the cultural expectations Americans have of schools for teaching students about commonly held attitudes, values, and beliefs that then provide a touchstone for framing core values of citizenship. These

are skills necessary for everyone if they are to move successfully through our society and work places as adults (Katz, 1978).

Historical Context

Banks (1994) describes education in America as rooted in historical traditions that accept and perpetuate "Anglo-conforming" values, manners, customs, and views. While this remains largely true, there have been attempts to broaden the scope. In fact, debate about how best to honor racial and ethnic pluralism in public schools is as much a central topic in education today as it has been since the 1950s. It is important to acknowledge the legacy of earlier education reform efforts aimed at addressing race relations in the United States. At various times in this century efforts have been made both within the legislative, legal, and education policy arenas to address the access to and quality of public education particularly as it diminishes or enhances different members of our society.

Industrial, economic, and social tensions which emerged out of changes caused by World War II ignited race based conflicts in many large United States cities during the early 1940s (Banks & Banks, 1978). Until this time public schools acted predominately as agencies for acculturation. Educators and researchers became increasingly aware of the need to connect education efforts to issues of race in response to the protests waged in cities across America (Banks, 1994).

In the 1940s, a more broadly conceptualized call for social reforms via education emerged. Two education-based efforts offer excellent examples of these initiatives. They were the Intergroup Education in Cooperating Schools Project and the American Council on Education Project called the College Study in Intergroup Relations (Cook, 1950; Taba,

Brady & Robinson, 1952). The Intergroup Education in Cooperating Schools Project directly addressed issues such as teacher preparation and intercultural dialogue skills in the K-12 school setting. The College Study in Intergroup Relations program focused on teacher education in twenty-four colleges to address the improvement of the intercultural component of teacher training programs. While it is reported that the programs made significant impacts on participants, eventually they both dissolved due to languishing economic funding and lost popular support (Cook, 1950).

Perhaps one of the most significant turning points in the relationship between the public school system and American race relations was the Brown vs. Board of Education Topeka decision. This decision, by the United States Supreme Court in 1954, reflected an attempt to intervene against more than two hundred years of institutionalized racism in American education. In its decision, the court identified the national education agenda as an important tool with which to guarantee particular cultural values held dear by Americans (i.e., equality and a "fair chance"). Education was held out as an institutional setting that would be held particularly responsible for addressing the oppression found in our culture (Rothenberg, 1988). However, even these kinds of law-based, national efforts to legislate changes in school settings externally have generally failed to produce the much hoped for culture-wide changes. Banks points to six reasons for the failure of past reforms related to intergroup education to become institutionalized (Banks, 1994, p. 25-6). These six reasons included the following:

1. the failure of educators to genuinely internalize the ideology and assumptions of intergroup education

2. the failure of the mainstream of Americans to identify with the movement as contributing to their major goals for schools

3. the misperception that intergroup education initiatives were reform projects only for schools that had open racial conflict

4. as racial tensions became more subtle (e.g., rioting stopped) educators no longer saw the need for action

5. the theory and practice of intergroup education remained marginalized due to "soft" funding and lack of genuine engagement by scholars

6. the movement leadership never developed a clear-cut relationship between the goals of the movement and basic American value sets (e.g., justice, equality, and individual rights).

By the end of the 1950s, Banks concludes education institutions had resumed a "business as usual" stance towards racial and ethnic diversity.

As education researchers, teachers and policy makers came to realize in the late 1980s, efforts like the "back to basics" movement appear to try to finesse the direct relationship between the social and political climate and learning conditions. Efforts to redress school change efforts in ways that take a more holistic, system-wide view of the school setting have led to the wave of education reform known as the multicultural education movement.

Currently, there is a national call for school change that advocates for the creation of and institutionalization of practices in schools that train teachers and create schools that are more socially just and equitable (Grant & Sleeter, 1986; Mitchell, 1987; Nieto, 1992; Pettigrew, 1981). Today, many communities explicitly expect ethnic and racial diversity, gender, and abilities to be addressed directly within the context of public schooling. The multicultural education movement offers an organization-wide model of

school change in which values of social justice and equity are clearly stated goals. Efforts are aimed at redressing what are perceived to be inequities in the substantive quality of the educational experience offered to some students because of factors of their social identity (e.g., economic status, racial and ethnic heritage, or gender).

Definition

Initially, multicultural education was defined as an effort to teach cultural heritage and acceptance of other cultures. The described goals of multicultural education have been to address and reduce prejudice, to develop pedagogy that encourages equity, and to empower a school culture and social structure that assures the success of all. Banks defines multicultural organization development as:

> "...a reform movement designed to make major curricular and structural changes in the education of students in the elementary and secondary schools and in colleges and universities..." (Banks, 1994, p. 44).

Change Goals

Multicultural education (MCE) reconceptualizes the nature of teaching and learning by systemically addressing multiple attributes of the school setting. These include formally recognized school policies and politics, teaching styles and strategies, the counseling program, assessment and testing procedures, the formalized curriculum and course of study, and instructional materials (Banks, 1994; Nieto, 1992; Sleeter, 1996). MCE attempts to change the informal setting of schools by addressing the climate-related attributes of the school environment such as the school culture, the "hidden" curriculum, the languages and dialects of the school, the nature of community

participation and input that is encouraged and respected, the school staff attitudes, and the perceptions, beliefs, and actions of teachers, students, and parents (Nieto, 1992).

Current school change efforts in the multicultural education movement also specifically undertake to address the organization development of schools systemically to better assure the success of all students. Multicultural education proponents advocate for excellence in teaching and learning of the "basics" (essential skills of reading, writing, and math performance) but do so in ways that significantly recreate the distribution of power and definition of "success" in the school setting.

Multicultural education theorists and practitioners, such as Banks, are in fact calling for a systemic intervention in reshaping schools:

> "Multicultural organization development reaches far beyond ethnic studies or the social studies. It is concerned with modifying the total educational environment so that it better reflects the ethnic and cultural diversity within a society…" (Banks, 1994, p. 50).

Banks outlines five important dimensions for multicultural education. These include content integration, the knowledge construction process, prejudice reduction, equity pedagogy, and an empowering school culture and social structure (Banks, 1994, p. 5). In addressing the nature of what gets taught and how it gets taught in school, multicultural education uses "critical pedagogy" (Banks, 1994; Sleeter, 1996). This is an overt theoretical commitment to addressing power dynamics in the teaching and learning process. It acts as an underlying philosophy and focuses on knowledge, reflection, and action as the basis for social change. Multicultural education can also be seen to emphasize the democratic principles of social justice (Nieto, 1992, p. 208).

Another example of the systemic changes inaugurated by the multicultural education movement is to include different voices across all of the processes of how schools are framed. This has meant restructuring the role of parents and community members, the expectations of students and teachers, the contributions of administrators, and the conceptualization and use of curricular and extracurricular resources and materials. All of these elements are asked to contribute towards socially transformative goals.

Asserting the ideal of a culturally pluralistic society, multicultural education has grown out of the cross-cultural education, human relations training, ethnic studies and multiethnic studies movements. It has taken particular root in elementary and secondary education settings as a school change and restructuring effort directed at creating more socially just and inclusive schools (Grant & Sleeter, 1986). It is increasingly recognized that the roles played by community representatives must be more than just "buying in." This is a recognition that the shape of the new systems that are being designed by current restructuring efforts and teams will be largely determined by the makeup of the team itself. However, in the past often these groups have been asked to participate in very limited roles. For example, as rubber-stamps for decisions made by administrators and state level bureaucrats. There has to be real representation of the diversity of the community and real decision making power must be delegated for substantial change (Carr, 1995).

Multicultural Education and Systemic School Change

Proponents of multicultural education describe a systemic intervention in schooling that ideally becomes manifested throughout the total school environment. This is done by addressing changes to the curriculum and instructional strategies, improving the quality of the interactions among teachers, students and parents, and by creating an active role for community advocates. By addressing the curriculum, the formal structures, and the informal culture of schooling, educational settings can be constructed that are truly designed for the success of all students. Such schools would give attention to content integration, the knowledge construction process, prejudice reduction, an empowering and social structure, and changes in pedagogy (Banks, 1994, p. 40).

Banks (1994) offers a comprehensive model of the current development of multicultural education curriculum goals and practices. He describes the emergence of multicultural education as gradual and evolutionary, rising out of social, political, and economic conditions, and he traces a historical continuum of five progressive phases of multicultural education (Banks, 1994, p. 43). The first phase was monoethnic courses (e.g., courses devoted to specific ethnic groups and characterized by the idea that these courses would could only be taught by and be of value to members of that particular ethnic community). The second phase, multiethnic studies courses, was characterized by an expanded demand for separate courses on the history and culture of different ethnic and racial groups. Such courses began to focus on several cultures from a comparative perspective to explore diverse points of view and experiences. The third phase, that of multiethnic education, marked a transition from a focus on individual courses to attention to more substantial education reform efforts. "Educators began to view the total school as

the unit of change, and not any one variable within the educational environment, such as materials or teaching strategies" (Banks, 1994, p. 43). The fourth phase, multicultural education, marked educational reform efforts aimed at expanding the scope of concern students of color to include other cultural groups such as "...women, people with disabilities, religious groups, and regional groups such as Appalachian Whites" (Banks, 1994, p. 43).

This constantly evolving effort, multicultural education, has also come to include initiatives that address the interaction of social identity factors like gender, race, socioeconomic status, religion, and physical ability. The most recent, the institutionalization process, is number five and is described as that phase of development where there is institutionalization of the "key and most effective" components of the first four phases (Banks, 1994, p. 44). Banks (1994) places particular emphasis on the long-term nature of truly embedding multicultural education practices within school systems. He underscores that these changes are a process that require strong support from institutionalized sources of power such as school boards, key administrators, and teachers over time (Banks, 1994, p. 44).

Significant research documents how difficult a task it is to effectively change teacher behaviors and textbook content without organization level support for addressing multicultural education (Cambronne, 1993; Sears, 1987; Sears, 1992). Sleeter (1992) suggests that it is as important to think about change in schools at the organization level, as well as focusing on educating individuals within the school. This is because most

teachers believe that it is this structural context that most determines what they can truly achieve with multicultural education change efforts.

Grant and Sleeter (1986) have developed a model of multicultural education that offers a typology of five general approaches to multicultural education. These include teaching the culturally different, human relations, single group studies, multicultural education (incorporating and reflecting contributions), and education that is multicultural and social reconstructionist (education that is teaching students to analyze oppression and develop social action skills). Grant and Sleeter's model reflects a more activist stance toward the implementation of school changes necessary for truly transformative innovations.

Nieto (1992) envisions multicultural education as a process of both comprehensive school reform and basic education for all students that will result in schools that are transformative and socially just. She describes multicultural education as working directly as an antiracist intervention and for the respect of the pluralism (ethnic, racial, linguistic, religious, economic, and gender) that students, teachers, and their communities represent (Nieto, 1992, p. 208). As an educator and researcher, Nieto is also a proponent of education that actively incorporates the experiences, values, and culture of students including a perspective of history from their point of view. Education should be "selected and constructed in relationship to their desires, visions, descriptions of reality and repertoires of action" (Nieto, 1992, p. 220).

Sleeter (1996) conducted an extensive review of critiques of multicultural education theory and practice and from that research she concluded that the defining

concept in understanding how each relate to the others is how a particular approach interprets inequality. She outlines three important stances used by multicultural theorists to define the concept of inequality: conservatism, liberalism, and radical structuralism (Sleeter, 1996).

Conservatives characterize inequality in school settings as largely resulting from individual differences in "natural endowment and effort" (Sleeter, 1996, p. 39). In essence, poor achievement is the result of poor genetics or culturally embedded shortcomings (such as an ethic that undervalues hard work). It is the conservatives view that, overall, the rest of the political and economic system is well intact and working fine for anyone sufficiently gifted and motivated to strive for success. The conservatives interpretation of multicultural education would seek to forefront programs that reduce tension about cultural difference, that highlight similarity across different groups, and that aim to help those who are different assimilate more effectively to the dominant (i.e., white, capitalist, and heterosexual) culture.

Liberalism acknowledges that there are inequalities in society based upon one's group membership (e.g., race and gender). However, the liberal perspective still adheres to an interpretation of inequality that underscores the individual consequences of these biases and sees the remedy for these inequalities as largely still available within the existing social and political order. For example, liberals express support for governmental interventions, like affirmative action programs, that attempt to intervene and to redress restrictions placed on people as a group. Liberals are described as being more optimistic about human nature in that, unlike conservatives, they believe that cultural and

institutional inequities are not biological certainties, but can be corrected and the effects ameliorated (Sleeter, 1996, p. 41). Sleeter points to research and practices designed to address gender inequity in schools, the efforts aimed at moving students with disabilities into "mainstream" classrooms, and second language programs as examples of liberals' attempts to address reforms in institutional biases in schools (Sleeter, 1996, p. 42). However, she cautions, a limitation of this approach is that it can offer "the illusion of significant activity, when in fact liberals do not entertain solutions that would radically alter the status quo" (Sleeter, 1996, p. 42).

Radical structuralism is the third, and last, category Sleeter identifies. Radical structuralists see education as controlled by the dominant social groups. Their belief is that any government intervention is predestined to serve the interests of the entrenched, wealthy, and powerful elite. While wary of tendency of education to become a system for the reproduction of inequitable relationships, education is viewed by radical structuralists as crucial for social change. It is, they believe, through education, that students can be helped to critically re-examine relationships between the over-privileged and the unempowered groups in our society and, over time, succeed in a more equitable reconstruction of their relationships (Sleeter, 1996, p. 45). The critique Sleeter offers of the radical structuralism position is that it is too often "prescriptive, offering suggestions for practice that decontextualize schools from larger structures of power relations" (Sleeter, 1996, p. 45).

Each of the MCE theorists described previously (Banks, Nieto, Grant and Sleeter) address elements of the three definitions of inequality described above and clearly fall

into that theoretical area between reform liberalism and radical structuralists. Sleeter appropriately chastises radical structuralism for a tendency to be too action-oriented and prescriptive. For many educators, this work requires a degree of personal transformation in their relationship to the issues of social justice and oppression as well as a personal transformation of their relationship to pedagogy, curriculum, and school organization. This pathway is being created as it is being walked.

This frame offered by Sleeter's conceptualization of definitions of inequality offers an excellent rationale for how multicultural education theory and practice might be further enhanced by the perspectives offered by multicultural organization development. For example, the personal transformation Sleeter notes is often required of teachers in preparation for addressing social oppression and social justice issues can be substantially supported when the values and goals of the organization also highly value attention to issues of equality and social justice. Sleeter also underscores the need to understand the change process in schools as intimately linked to the larger social context of inequality and injustice. The movement from organization development to multicultural organization development theory and practice explicitly signaled a similar understanding that efforts to change organizations must begin with a consideration of and a response to the larger social context and cultural values within which the organization is embedded.

Multicultural Organization Development

As explored in the following section, multicultural organization development seeks to eradicate social oppression and injustice by addressing inequity via a systemic analysis, a long-term change process, and a "bottom up" as well as "top down"

assessment, and by engendering a dialogue about justice and equity across the entire organization.

There is increasing interest in how the principles of organization development theory might be applied to issues of school change (Bolman & Deal, 1991; Fullan, Miles & Taylor, 1980; Schmuck & Runkel, 1985; Yeskel, 1985). While most of the practices and theory of organization development have emerged historically out of the corporate environment, new applications of organization development theory offer great promise for strengthening efforts to improve schools.

Definition

The historical roots of organization development emerged from the human relations movement in sociology, group psychology studies, and the corporate relations environment. Since the 1950s, organization development has been the discipline that has traditionally provided some measure of assistance to organizations attempting to change. Bennis (1969) defined organization development as:

> "... a response to change, a complex educational strategy intended to change the beliefs, attitudes, values, and structures of organizations so that they can better adapt to new technology, markets, and challenges and to the dizzying rate of change itself..." (Bennis, 1969).

A review of the current literature in the field of organization development still finds little agreement on a concise, standard definition of what constitutes organization development. There are some interesting and useful variations on how it is conceptualized. Many of the operative definitions of organization development have been expanded to acknowledge that the nature of interrelationships in organizations must

necessarily reflect the nature of inequity and social injustice that continue to haunt the broader culture.

Theoretical frameworks for addressing social justice issues in organization development emerged with the efforts of both practitioners and theorists since the 1970s. The work of Jackson and Hardiman (1981), Jackson and Holvino (1988), and field practitioners like Elsie Y. Cross (in Driscoll, 1993) continue to refine definitions of organization development that directly address issues of equity and social justice in an organization development context.

The definition I have found most useful is offered by Driscoll (1993). This definition offers multicultural organization development as an "organizational transformation effort that has as its primary objective the creation of socially diverse and socially-just organizations." It extends organization developments mission of changing the process and structure of organizations by directly addressing the organizations social-justice agenda. It also defines organization development as a change strategy for organizational self-development and renewal (Driscoll, 1993). The definition offered by Driscoll emphasizes a systemic approach advocating that long term change in organizations must come from interventions which focus on the entire system. This implicitly acknowledges organizations are organism-like in that efforts to change any one part necessarily must influence the whole body.

Application to Schools

Many theorists and practitioners also acknowledge that any definition is necessarily a compromise adapted from business settings and applied to education

settings (Fullan et al., 1980). Researchers and educators have adapted and applied many of the current principles and practices of organization development to school settings (Bolman & Deal, 1991; Fullan, 1987; Schmuck & Runkel, 1985). An organization development-based design is an intervention that incorporates short term and long terms change goals. By offering a continuous process, an organization development design seeks to involve sub-units across the whole context of the school over enough time to allow real change to take root and gain support. Schmuck and Runkel (1985) define organization development in schools as:

> "...a coherent, systematically planned, sustained effort at system self-study and improvement, focusing explicitly on change in norms, structures, and procedures, using behavioral science concepts. Organization development involves system members themselves in the active assessment, diagnosis, and transformation of their own organization" (Schmuck & Runkel, 1985, p. 47).

Organization development consultants do not use a medical model of "diagnosis." Rather, the emphasis is on assisting organizations in developing ways to assess and solve their own problems. This approach appears to have a more long lasting impact on school improvement than a whole series of in-service programs by outside experts on innovations in curriculum or teaching strategies (Fullan, 1987).

Multicultural organization development theory enhances and extends the field of organization development by articulating a sensitivity to and relatedness of organizations to culture wide change initiatives and by addressing the impact of cultural, institutional, and individual socialization (Jackson & Hardiman, 1994; Jackson & Holvino, 1988; Katz, 1978). Like the field of organization development before it, multicultural organization development takes a systemic perspective and includes every aspect of an organization

(mission, resources, processes, product, and people) as all equally important components of the growth and change towards social justice.

Organization development has traditionally focused on individual relations and attempted to facilitate interpersonal relations between groups (intergroup relations). However, social justice issues were never fully brought into organization development work, or addressed in systems application and practice literature until the 1970s. Holvino (1988) notes that early pioneers in organization development were hopeful that their work would be applied to minority and intergroup relations, community issues, and social concerns. However, historically, the field of organization development has not considered these elements as intrinsically related in that "social oppression and changing organizations is not a central topic in social liberation literature and social liberation is not a central topic in organization development literature" (Holvino, 1988).

Models

Camino (1995) has contributed a typology of multicultural organization development. Based on her research, she suggests that the underlying assumptions of an organization powerfully affect the type of service provided. Camino (1995) offers a stage model that identifies four current organizational orientations to multiculturalism:

1. business as usual with unusual populations organization
2. replacement organization
3. additive organization
4. systemic change organization.

Jackson and Hardiman (1981b) have also described a detailed typology of the development of a multicultural organization. Their model has three organization levels:

1. monocultural
2. nondiscriminating
3. multicultural.

Additionally, within each of these three key levels are six stages of organization development which indicate developmental shifts, as Table 1, which follows, illustrates.

Table 1. Stages in the Development of a Multicultural Organization

Stage	Type	Descriptors
One	Exclusionary Organization	Mission, membership criteria openly discriminate.
Two	"The Club"	Mission, policies, norms and procedures allow for a few "selected, right" representatives.
Three	Compliance Organization	Provide some access without departing from mission, structure, culture; maintains status quo.
Four	Affirmative Action Organization	Recruits and promotes members of social groups other than the "majority," training provided.
Five	Redefining Organization	Actively engages in envisioning, planning and problem solving to find ways to ensure the full inclusion of all.
Six	Multicultural Organization	Reflects contributions of diverse cultural and social groups, acts on commitment to eradicate social oppression in all forms, all members full participants, follows through on external social responsibilities.

The definitions offered by multicultural organization development theorists acknowledge an underlying commonality of forms of oppression and suggest that intervention to interrupt one manifestation (e.g., racism, sexism, anti-Semitism, ableism, or heterosexism) lays groundwork for interventions around others (Jackson & Holvino, 1988). In the 1990s, the concern with racial and gender dynamics in organizations has continued to expand to include other manifestations of oppression too. One of the strengths of the organization development model is that it offers multiple points of entry into systems change and goals for a more socially just organization. This flexibility encourages the organization to assess how it currently functions, defines itself, and understands the need for change, and then to create the appropriate interventions on behalf of the needs of oppressed groups.

To date, most research efforts on multicultural organization development interventions have focused on corporate based efforts to address racism and sexism; however, there are efforts to extend the application of this model. "While organization developments track record on dealing with heterosexism is for the most part nonexistent, it has built a foundation of experience dealing with the similar concerns of racism and sexism" (Yeskel, 1985, p. 28). There is a natural and principled bridge for extending this current theory and practice directly to issues of gay, lesbian, and bisexual people in organizations (Bolman & Deal, 1991; Fullan, 1987; Fullan et. al., 1980; Sarason, 1982; Sarason & Klaber, 1985; Schmuck & Runkel, 1985). Further, multicultural organization development offers practical, meaningful strategies for conceptualizing and implementing systemic change efforts that are developmentally and organizationally appropriate (and hence more likely to succeed) for school settings.

Organization Development and School Settings

The work of several educational researchers and practitioners offers some applications of organization development theory and practice to school settings. For example, Bolman and Deal (1991) have identified eight correlates of an effective school culture. The eight correlates are that vision supports excellence, not criticism; that collegiality is the most important of all catalysts; that shared values and interests lead to trust; that quality is determined by good development information and constant improvement; that personal and professional development are crucial to success; that there must be true employee empowerment; that there must be sustained innovation; and that there must be support for school-university partnerships.

Schmuck and Runkel 1994 have defined a school-based model for implementing an organization development change initiative. Their model identifies an organization development intervention in a school setting as consisting usually of six steps. These six steps include:

1. start up and contract building;
2. diagnosing current functions;
3. designing the project (micro and macro aspects);
4. assessing designs and monitoring progress;
5. terminating the project;
6. institutionalizing the school's capability for continuous problem solving (Schmuck & Runkel, 1985, p. 30).

To be able to support such an organization development level intervention, Schmuck and Runkel (1985) also suggest that it is necessary to have a state of "readiness" in the school. There are five readiness factors identified by Schmuck and Runkel (1985) that serve as indicators of whether the school or district is ready for change. These five factors include:

1. a press for change in the organization itself (sometimes evinced by ability to imagine things differently);
2. support for change to happen;
3. stability in key personnel;
4. norms for supporting collaboration;
5. the presence of a spirit of risk taking (Schmuck & Runkel, 1985, p. 53).

A multicultural organization development (MCOD) model of change is particularly useful in addressing social justice and equity issues in the context of schools. MCOD utilizes sustained cognitive and affective strategies that recognize and support resolutions amidst competing goals and constituencies. For example, MCOD advocates organization change by comprehensively addressing the mission, values, structure, technology, management practices, psychosocial climate, environmental interactions, and the "bottom line" of the organization. Any one of these elements becomes a useful point of entry into the work of change.

Multicultural Organization Development and School Change

Multicultural organization development theory clearly addresses the impact of cultural, institutional, and individual socialization in ways that offer much for schools

engaged in system level change efforts (Jackson & Hardiman, 1994; Jackson & Holvino, 1988; Katz, 1989). It offers practical, meaningful strategies useful to schools for assessing current climate, for conceptualizing and implementing systemic change initiatives, and it offers evaluation methods that can be tailored in developmentally appropriate ways (and hence more likely to succeed). To date, however, there have been only very limited efforts undertaken in changing educational environments based on the principles and practice of multicultural organization development.

Education researchers have suggested ways in which the principles of multicultural organization development might inform the leadership and management practices of colleges and universities. For example, at the college level student services providers have suggested applications such as staff development training for residential housing staff members (Manning, 1994; Pope, 1993). Yeskel (1991) has applied these principles to the development of student services specifically addressing the needs of gay, lesbian, and bisexual university and college students. Another example of how an application of the principles of multicultural organization development may be applied to a whole subsystem within a college setting is offered by Stoffle and Tarin (1994). They applied the Jackson & Holvino (1988) model of multicultural organization development to university libraries. They suggest the model as useful for encouraging a consciously systemic approach to anti-racist, organization development in a higher education setting (Stoffle & Tarin, 1994).

Stakeholders

Educational systems design theory has long recognized the fundamental need for community supports if change efforts are to be successful. One conceptual application of the principles of multicultural organization development, which has found its way into school change initiatives, is the concept of organization stakeholders. Stakeholders are defined as those attempting to influence the allocation of resources or intended direction of the school system (Carr, 1995). Efforts to include more different voices, or stakeholders, in systemic change efforts in school settings have most often taken the form of seeking a public "buy-in" of parents and community members within traditional institutionalized vehicles such as Parent Teacher Associations. As school change issues have become more complicated, costly, and politicized it has become clear that parents, teachers, students, and community members are much more assertive about desiring to influence the policies, practices, and distribution of resources in schools.

More recently, efforts at building a broader support base for changes in educational settings have recognized the need for the support of all of the members invested in the school setting by including teachers, students, parents, and community members. Schools have begun to ensure that this increased participation is meaningful, not symbolic or "rubber stamping." In fact, what has been the call for a long time by community members and parents has become clearer now to many teachers, researchers, and administrators. This is that traditional methods for gathering information and mechanisms for making important decisions about schools are too limited. As schools respond to increasingly diverse communities (diversity that is often not reflected in the profile of the teaching staff) they must invent new relationships within the school and

between the school system and the community (Banks, 1994; Nieto, 1992; Sleeter, 1992). These changes are reflected, for example, in decisions about who participates in school based staff development workshops. Vojtek (1992) reports in her research survey of staff developers that school districts which have traditionally only involved teachers and administrators in professional growth opportunities, are now beginning to involve support staffs, as well as reaching out to parents and other community members (Vojtek, 1992).

Multicultural organization development theory and practice offers much that has the potential to help schools effectively, and significantly, address the needs of gay youth. MCOD theory and practice is predicated upon an acknowledgment that cultural, institutional, and individual socialization processes have a profound impact on the values, attitudes, and expectations found in organizations. To address gay issues in school settings effectively, interventions must address the affective, as well as the cognitive, belief systems and accepted cultural norms. MCOD calls for interventions paced over enough time to allow these dual, but reinforcing, processes to unfold. Like the multicultural education radical structuralists, MCOD stresses the community and national context of relationships of power between participants in a system. This is an important factor in understanding the often overwhelming, dynamic of heterosexism in school settings. Heterosexism is often invisible in school settings to anyone not gay or lesbian, therefore the offer of a sound theoretical and practical baseline for organization assessment that addresses inequity in relationships on behalf of oppressed groups is of great importance.

Conclusions

School change efforts rarely address directly the school-based needs of gay youth. However, this review proposes that a synthesis of multicultural education and multicultural organization development theory and practice have the potential to create a wellspring of effective support for just such efforts at school organization changes. The experience of educators and education-based research already illuminate eloquently many of the needs gay youth experience in schools settings. Researchers, teachers, and student participants have also provided useful feedback on directions (e.g., innovations in pedagogy, curriculum content, teacher and administrator training, increasing student awareness, and offering peer-based support) for efforts aimed at school change. Furthermore, it is suggested here that by bringing together the education change practices of MCE and the theoretical and practice-based methods of MCOD, much can be learned about how schools can make systemic changes that address many different forms of social oppression (e.g., race, gender, religion, and ability).

Clearly, most secondary schools exact a terrible toll from gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth individually, and detract from the secondary school experiences of all youth in general. There are current examples of school systems, in selected communities and states, that address the needs of gay youth directly through either community-based or partially school-based efforts. Nationally, a great deal of interest has been expressed in enhancing and extending efforts to make schools more inclusive particularly around such issues as ethnicity, race, gender, and sexual orientation. Parents, community members, educators and students are demanding that this gap in services be addressed and remedied.

Multicultural education and multicultural organization development models advocate for inclusive and socially just institutions. Both are based on an advocacy of respect and human dignity, and both offer support for the reconceptualization of schools as truly inclusive and socially just environments. Both also acknowledge the need to look for change over time, and offer methods for addressing the cognitive and affective components of the change process. Most importantly, the values and principles, as well as specific strategies, of each of these perspectives offer important guidance for change initiatives. They acknowledge and attempt to respond to the economic and political contexts of such radical change efforts by addressing the cultural and institutional aspects of the inequity in power in relationships between groups. The nature of the homophobia and heterosexism embedded in school settings requires the long term, strategic interventions currently modeled by MCE and MCOD efforts to redress these inequities in power.

Multicultural education theory and multicultural organization development theory and practices offer substantial assistance in understanding how to assess, intervene, evaluate, and institutionalize education change efforts at local, community, statewide and national levels. Real change will come in schools by effectively addressing every aspect of the organization (e.g., superintendent and principal led policy and supervision changes, teacher preparation and staff development, curriculum change, community involvement, and redistribution of facilities and resources). Additionally, the issues for gay, lesbian, and bisexual students in school settings resonate directly with the issues that effect the school experiences of heterosexual youth. The egalitarian principles and values of MCE and MCOD could support efforts in schools to develop under the same umbrella,

programs designed to make secondary schools more equitable, more safe, and more inclusive for all youth. The creation of a linkage between all issues of oppression also provides the ethical integrity needed to truly undo a system of inequity based on privileging a few over the needs of the whole. In other words to address these issues is, ultimately, to create educational environments with integrity and that will benefit all students.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Many schools participating in the Massachusetts Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students have implemented at least one of the four recommendations of the Governor's Commission on Safe Schools. For example, many have established student education and support groups known as "gay/straight alliances." However, markedly few schools have initiated efforts to assess the impact that these efforts have had on the overall school setting. The purpose of this descriptive case study is to better understand, from a system-wide perspective, how participants in this high school setting perceive changes in themselves, the school system, and the school climate related to their participation in the Safe Schools Program. In this chapter, the overall research design and methodology of the study is presented; the individual participants and the school are described; the data gathering and management procedures, as well as analysis strategies, used are profiled; and the steps taken to safeguard trustworthiness are delineated.

The Research Questions

Four research questions that guided this study:

1. What changes did participants perceive in their selves, in the school organization, and/or in the school climate based on the activity of the Safe Schools Committee and related to the Safe Schools Program?

2. What historical markers, leaders, or events did participants identify as particularly important ones for the Safe Schools Committee and in the school's participation in the Safe Schools Program?

3. Why did participants think these particular marker events or leaders were important for changes in themselves, the school system, and/or in the school climate?

4. What did participants identify as the "next steps," or as useful future goals, for the Safe Schools Committee in relation to their participation in the Safe Schools Program?

Overarching Approach

Qualitative research methodology is especially useful when conducting research on an innovative system or when investigating areas of education where there is little prior research (Marshall & Rossman, 1989; Merriam, 1988). Merriam defines a qualitative case study as "…an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit" (Merriam, 1988, p. 21). Merriam also states that, "…research focused on discovery, insight, and understanding from the perspectives of those being studied offers the greatest promise of making significant contributions to the knowledge base and practice of education" (Merriam, 1988, p. 3). Bogdan and Taylor endorse the choice of qualitative research methods when the researcher seeks to address "…settings and the individuals within those settings holistically; that is, the subject of the study, be it an organization or an individual, is not reduced to an isolated variable…" (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975, p. 4). Bogdan and Biklen theorize that the strength of qualitative research design is that it offers " a detailed examination of one setting, or one single subject, or one single depository of documents, or one particular event" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 58). Qualitative methodology is also useful in designing research that is exploratory, includes an interest in discovery of tacit aspects within organizations, and

when it is important to "...stress the importance of context, setting, and subject's frame of reference..." (Marshall and Rossman, 1989, p. 46).

To date, little research effort has been applied to understanding how the goals and programs of the Safe Schools Program may be influencing or holistically changing individual school settings as organizations, as well as having an impact on the experiences of individuals within the school system. Schmuck and Runkel (1994) theorize that "many efforts at educational reform have failed or passed by without effect precisely because of the limited attention given to the organizational context in which reforms were attempted" (Schmuck & Runkel, 1994, p. 7). Merriam, in presenting a review of criterion-based sampling, states that a setting that has been identified as a "reputational-case" (based upon the recommendations of experts) can constitute a suitably useful setting for a case study (Merriam, 1988, p. 50). This descriptive case study explores just such a reputational-case by examining the change process in one high school participating in the Massachusetts Safe Schools Program. The aim is a holistic description of the change process constructed from this in-depth focus on one school setting and the perspective of individuals at each level of the school organization. Data collection methods included document collection and review, participant observation, and semi-structured interviews coupled with a brief questionnaire with a purposeful sample drawn from across the school system.

Participants in the Study

"Select High School," renamed in this study for purposes of anonymity, was chosen from the pool of public high schools currently participating in the Massachusetts

Department of Education Safe Schools Program based upon three criteria. These criteria included a demonstrated commitment to participation in the Safe Schools Program, substantial overall school size, and reputation as an exemplar program. Select High School was a participant in the Massachusetts Department of Education Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students for three years before this study began and had not engaged in any organization change efforts related to gay and lesbian youth prior to this one. The second criterion, the size of the school, was considered an important factor because substantial school size was expected to increase anonymity for participants and, therefore support their participation in the study. Select High School is located in a community characterized as "large" by the Massachusetts Department of Education (Education, 1997). The third criterion, and the one most heavily weighed, was that the high school be described as an exemplar school by educators and researchers familiar with both the needs of gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth in school settings and the Safe Schools Program. Such recommendations were consistently collected about Select High School from Department of Education Safe Schools program consultants, University of Massachusetts Amherst School of Education faculty, and statewide gay, lesbian, and bisexual community activists. The reasons most often reported for this recommendation were several. Select High School was perceived to have achieved a high degree of success in establishing district-wide administrative support for their program (i.e., building principals, superintendents, and school committee members). Additionally, they were recognized as supporting work on gay youth issues across the entire high school setting (e.g., students, teachers, and administrators). And, lastly, they were recognized

consistently for being innovative and comprehensive in their incorporation of community members (social activists, parents, and social service providers) in their programs.

Description of Select High School

Select High School is located in a community with a population of approximately 65,000. The community is an economically developed suburb, located outside of the Boston, Massachusetts metropolitan area. The high school includes grades nine through twelve. Ninety percent of resident students in the district attend public schools. Select High School is the only high school in the district. There are nine elementary schools and two middle schools, as well. The population of the district is currently predominately white (seventy-one percent) with Hispanics the next largest racial group (fourteen and a half percent). Figures for per pupil expenditures at $5, 773.00 are higher than the state average of $5,234.00 (Education, 1997). In 1994, seventy-seven per cent of high school graduates from this district went on to a four-year college and eight per cent went on to a two-year college. The four and two tenths per cent drop out rate reflects a "better than average" which is four per cent statewide. Students in this district can also fulfill individual education goals via an alternative high school program, independent study, Adult Evening School, and summer school (Education, 1997).

Description of Individual Participants

Patton (1990) refers to a purposeful sample as cases "from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research" (Patton, 1990, p. 169). Similarly, Lincoln and Guba address naturalistic sampling as effective methodology when the research goal is to maximize information and not statistical

importance or generalizability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 202). Individual participants in the study were drawn from each organization level of the school system: students, teachers/specialists, administrators, school committee members, and community-based service providers. Patton (1990) describes the people who play key roles in how the organization develop as "gatekeepers" and suggest that it is important to identify them early on in a research study. At Select High School this group included the high school principal and the members of the Safe Schools Committee. Further interviewees were determined based upon two techniques. The first, is identified as "snowballing" (Patton, 1990) and the second is known as "redundancy" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). At the end of each interview I asked participants to identify anyone they perceived to be important in the efforts of the Safe Schools Committee at their school who they recommended I interview. Lincoln and Guba state that "if the purpose is to maximize information, then sampling is terminated when no new information is forthcoming from newly sampled units" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 202). Merriam (1988) states that "one selects a case study approach because one wishes to understand the particular in depth, not because one wants to know what is generally true of the many" (Merriam, 1988, p. 173). I continued to seek out additional interviews until such time as no new information was forthcoming from members at that organization level. Based upon these techniques, a purposeful sample of students, teachers, administrators, school committee members, and community members who were identified as important to the success (or as particularly invested in the work of the Safe Schools Committee) were identified and interviewed.

Data Collection and Management

Experienced qualitative researchers have established that the overall credibility of the data collection process can be significantly enhanced by a methodology known as triangulation (Merriam, 1986; Marshall & Rossman, 1989). Triangulation consists of "multiple sources of data, or multiple methods to confirm the emerging findings" (Merriam, 1986, p. 169). In light of the proven advantages of triangulation, this study utilized three primary data collection techniques: document review, participant observation, and semi-structured interviews (Marshall & Rossman, 1989; Patton, 1990).

Document Review

Documents collected for this study included a range of primary and secondary materials. Primary documents were those that related specifically to the work of the Safe Schools Committee or to Select High School. Secondary documents were those materials that either directly or indirectly supported the goals of the Safe Schools Program but formally fell under the auspices of other programs.

Primary documents, those directly related to the work of the committee, included the annual funding proposals to the Department of Education Safe Schools Program, internal school administration memos and notices, agendas and minutes of meetings, and materials developed for both teacher and student training. I also reviewed the personal notes of individual committee members on several of the student workshops. I also sought out whatever materials I could locate that reflected broader school-wide efforts such as the Select High School Sexual Harassment Policy. I reviewed articles in Select High School's student newspaper and the 1997 student yearbook; resources available via

the school library (books and videos) that contained themes that address gay, lesbian, and bisexual issues; and the student policies handbook. The "Selected Public Schools Strategic Plan, 1997-2002" and the "Select High School Program of Studies 1997-1998" were informative as well. Two videotapes of all-school assemblies (for students and teachers) that addressed gay issues were also reviewed.

Secondary documents included those that related to either the broader, statewide Safe Schools Program or that indirectly addressed issues central to the Safe Schools Committee goals. These included reports produced by the Massachusetts Department of Education such as the "1995 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey" and the Department of Education Safe Schools Program annual report "Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students Third Annual Report 1995-1996." Reports written by agencies in the community helped to further establish the context of the program at Select High School. For example, the "Survey of High School Students in Selectown" prepared by the Selectown Coalition for the Prevention of Alcohol and Drug Abuse. A videotape of a national evening news program, "48 Hours: The Class of 2000" was also reviewed because it interviewed gay students from the metropolitan area of Selectown who were closely associated with many of the students actively involved with the Safe Schools Committee at Select High School. Additionally, a collection of letters documenting exchanges in the Letters to the Editor column of the local newspaper were provided to me by both a teacher and a student. The collection documented several years of an ongoing public debate between two writers about whether gay youth issues should or should not be addressed at the high school.

Participant Observation

Marshall and Rossman consider participant observation to be a primary data collection method in that " immersion in the setting allows the researcher to hear, see, and begin to experience reality as the participants do" (Marshall & Rossman, 1989, p. 79). Based upon information gathered during the entry process and recommendations gained in individual interviews, I chose a representative sample of events and activities to attend at Select High School. It is important to note that the range of observation opportunities available was affected by the time of the school year observations were conducted and by the Safe Schools Committee program goals for this particular year. These constraints notwithstanding, the participant observation process did establish a first hand impression of the school climate and culture during the spring and summer of 1997. Participant observations focused on activities directly related to the work of the Safe School Committee, but also included a selected representative sample of most of the formal organizational levels of the school.

The work of the Safe Schools Committee was my central focus, initially, because it provided a degree of organization to my efforts to get to know individuals in the school, to get a better feel for the overall climate of the school setting, and to begin interviews. I also thought that this subgroup was likely to be the epicenter of the change process and would be excellent informants about other important interviewees and also where to focus future data collection. I attended virtually all of the meetings of this group from April 1997 until the end of August 1997 to gain the greatest familiarity possible with the day-to-day efforts of the Safe School Committee. At times, these meetings were with the Safe School Committee members alone (usually planning upcoming events or projects) and

other times they included others such as an external school consultant (planning a teacher training workshop series) or central office staff members. The duration of time of observation varied according to the nature of the event. Administrative meetings generally lasted an hour.

Participant observations also included attending a range of events involving teachers, students and their parents, and community members. These were usually stand-alone events, but often had a more comprehensive agenda, and therefore might last, for example, from two to three hours. At the teacher level, for example, I attended a pre-prom faculty chaperone training meeting and a school-wide Crises Task Force meeting. I also attended three days of a five-day summer training workshop on diversity for teachers across the entire school district. Each observation day lasted a full four and one half-hours.

At the student level, I attended two planning meetings of a subcommittee of a Junior-year English class that was working on a community service project related to gay and lesbian issues. I attended one meeting of the student Gay/Straight Alliance. And, at the community level, a senior graduation party for gay, lesbian, and bisexual students associated with the local community-based support group.

This latter event is of particular importance because it was the only opportunity over the course of the study to meet and interact significantly with parents of gay and lesbian students at Selected High School. Table 2, which follows, illustrates these observations.

Table 2. Organizational Distribution of Participant Observations

Participant Observations	Frequency
Students	
♦ Junior Year Advanced Placement English Class	2
Educators	
♦ Teachers/Specialists (Summer 1997 Diversity Training Workshop)	3
♦ Crises Task Force Meeting	1
♦ Teacher Chaperone Training for Senior Prom	1
Safe Schools Committee	4
Community Members	
♦ Graduation Dinner	1

Interviews

Semi-structured individual and focus groups interviews were used to address the research goal of gaining a better understanding of the context of people's behavior, and thus to better understand the meaning of that behavior within the unique organization setting (Seidman, 1991). Merriam defines as a semistructured interview as an interview that is "guided by a set of questions and issues to be explored, but neither the exact wording nor the order of questions is predetermined" (Merriam, 1988, p. 86). Participants were asked to respond to a series of semi-structured interview questions based upon the four overarching research questions of the study.

Interviews at the individual level are were important to gather the perspectives and insights unique to particular participants found in different positions across the

school organization, in the Selectown community, and from the perspective of the Department of Education. Interviewees for this study included students and adults, both heterosexual and gay and lesbian-identified, in a range of roles related to Selected High School.

Three students were interviewed individually and all were seniors. All three were women; two volunteered that they identify as lesbian and one as heterosexual. Each had attended Selected High School for their entire high school education, and two of them had known each other since grade school. Two of the students had been very involved with the Safe Schools Committee for the past three years (e.g., they helped found the Gay/Straight Alliance) and one had been only peripherally involved (through friendship networks). Thirty-one students participated in the focus group interview of the AP English class and five students participated in the Gay/Straight Alliance focus group. The students in the two focus group interviews were fairly evenly split between girls and boys and none were asked to identify their sexual orientation.

There were twenty-one adults interviewed and included thirteen educators (e.g., teachers, specialists, and central staff administrators) and eight community members (e.g., Department of Education, Massachusetts Prevention Center, Lesbian and Gay community activists, and education consultants). In the group of thirteen educators there were four men and nine women and of these, eleven identified as heterosexual and two identified as lesbian. As educators, their experience levels were either very low (i.e., in their second or third year teaching) or they were high (i.e., more than twenty years of experience). It may be helpful to additionally describe that the core members of Select High School's Safe

Schools Committee were all women, three who identified as heterosexual and two as lesbians. All of these women are highly respected, senior staff members. The two women identified as lesbians are also publicly "out" to their building principals and many of their colleagues. In the group of eight community members, there were a total of four women and four men. Of these eight participants, four had prior experience as teachers in secondary school systems (two had less then five years and two had more then ten years each) and three of these women identified as lesbian and three of these men as gay.

Each interviewee received a complete explanation of the study and the opportunity to talk in person with me about the ramifications of participation. I scheduled most interviews at least a week prior to the actual date so participants had the opportunity to reconfirm their interest in participation over time. Each person was given a written consent form to sign and return before the actual interview. I used a semi-structured design for interviews to encourage a conversational tone to emerge and, therefore, the duration of interviews varied from one hour to over three hours. Participants with greater familiarity with the school system and the Safe Schools Committee often had much more to say about the change process. The length of individual interviews was based upon the pace and energy level set by each participant and their perception that there was nothing more to add.

Research on any topic related to gay youth is a sensitive issue in school settings. This required forthrightness and clarity on my part as a researcher. Focus group interviews were used as a method to further ensure the protection of participants' anonymity and confidentiality. Particular attention was paid to protecting student

participants in the study. All students were also asked to provide permission from their parent (or appropriate guardian) as well as giving their personal consent. Table 3, which follows, illustrates the interview distribution.

Table 3. Organizational Distribution of Interviews

Participant Observations	Individual	Focus Group
Students		
♦ Individuals	3	0
♦ Gay/Straight Alliance	0	1
♦ Junior AP English Class	0	1
Educators		
♦ Teachers/Specialists	4	0
♦ Building Principal	1	0
♦ Central Staff Administrators	4	0
Safe Schools Committee Members	5	2
Community Members		
♦ Department of Education SSP	2	0
♦ School Committee	2	0
♦ Massachusetts Prevention Center	1	0
♦ Gay and Lesbian Activists	2	0

Twice, a focus group format was used specifically to heighten anonymity and lower risk levels for student participants. The students in these two focus groups were only loosely involved in the Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students and, therefore, may not have had the established relationships of support within the school

environment. Additionally, all responses from students in focus groups were collected in aggregated formats (e.g., brainstorm lists) and focused only on their perceptions of school-based changes related to the Safe Schools Program (never on personal disclosure of sexual orientation).

The management of the data collected as part of this study began immediately. I coded all data for anonymity, transcribed all interviews and participant observation notes verbatim, and combed for themes as I collected data. Additionally, I coded for themes all correspondence, print documents (e.g., manuals, policies, staff and student training materials, etc.), and audio/video/media resources collected for review and stored all materials in such a way as to protect the confidentiality of Select High School and the individual participants. Categories used for coding included filing codes for each organization level of the school (e.g., students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community members), and the transcriptions of each interview. The coding keys used for documents, transcripts, and audio-tapes were kept separate from all original resources.

Data Analysis

The overall approach to data analysis utilized in this study followed strategies suggested by Bogdan and Biklen (1975), Marshall and Rossman (1989), and Patton (1990) for qualitative research design. Additionally, three key perspectives informed the scope of data collected and acted as catalysts for the initial analysis of the data that emerged from this study. Each of these tools offered a particular insight into how to describe and then better understand the strategies and innovations at Select High School as a multicultural organization. The three tools included the following:

1. The four recommendations of the Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students, as published in the "Making Schools Safe For Gay and Lesbian Youth: Breaking the Silence in Schools and in Families Education Report" (Youth, 1993).

2. The "Diagnostic Areas for Multicultural Assessment" adapted for use in this school setting (Jackson & Hardiman, 1981a).

3. A continuum of change strategies suggested from current research on school based interventions to meet the needs of gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth (Ouellett, 1996).

Recommendations of the Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students

The Governors Commission on Gay and Lesbian Youth and the Safe Schools Program of the Massachusetts Department of Education made four key recommendations to schools in order to support the school-based needs of lesbian and gay youth. These four recommendations constitute the overarching goals for the statewide program and are reiterated regularly in a range of publications by the Department of Education. A review of Select High School's efforts to meet goals that address these four areas establishes a context for understanding how their school-based efforts keep pace with the four commonly held objectives of the statewide program. The four recommendations of the report are:

1. to develop policies protecting gay, lesbian, and bisexual students from harassment, violence, and discrimination

2. to offer training to school personnel in violence prevention and suicide prevention

3. to offer school-based support groups for gay, lesbian, and heterosexual students

4. to provide school-based counseling for family members of gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth.

These four formal recommendations of the Governors Commission on Gay and Lesbian Youth and the Massachusetts Safe Schools Program are purposely designed to be general enough to allow individual school districts to modify and adapt these objectives to best meet their own circumstances and priorities. For example, the formal recommendations do not address changes to curriculum materials, but Select High School has supported initiatives in this arena. Given the general character of these recommendations, additional measures were found to be useful in describing more particular changes taking place at Select High School and in better understanding the impact of these efforts.

Indicators of Multicultural Organization Development

The second tool of analysis used in this study is the "Diagnostic Areas for Multicultural Assessment" developed by Jackson and Holvino (1988). To describe the changes in Select High School from an organization-wide perspective, a baseline of indicators was adapted from a multicultural organization development analysis model. The Jackson & Holvino (1988) model identifies seven key areas for multicultural organization assessment. These areas include the organizations values (e.g., the stated goals and mission), its structure (e.g., who is represented in the personnel), and the distribution of and access to the organization's technology (e.g., hardware/software, funding, staff training and development). Other areas include management (e.g., formal and informal policies and practices, expected roles and rewards), culture (e.g., climate, expectations), environment (e.g., how the organization interacts with the broader community), and the "bottom line" (e.g., the goals of the organization intrinsically reinforce other multicultural organization development goals like equity). These seven

areas of assessment also provided the central focus of the clusters of questions for the semi-structured interviews.

Continuum of Change Efforts

The third tool of analysis was a model that describes how different school-based change strategies that directly address issues for gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth relate to each other and may contribute to school-wide change (Ouellett, 1996). This model was developed by me based upon the current research literature and from observations drawn from my experience as a teacher and professional practice as an education consultant.

The Process

As recommended by Bogdan and Taylor (1975) and Patton (1990), field notes were gathered systematically during the research study. My notes recorded my impressions and feelings as I gathered data. I also used them as the record for notes on the context for the information being recorded, and to organize my thoughts on connections I perceived between my observations, and the research questions as well as areas that appeared promising for future exploration. In the analysis phase of the study my notes were useful in helping me to recall particular aspects of the data gathering process and the nuances about the context in which the data emerged.

Based upon interview transcriptions, field notes taken on observations, my researcher's diary, and data culled from documents reviewed, themes and comparisons across the individual school settings were generated (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975; Marshall & Rossman, 1989; Patton, 1990). Patton asserts that, "...the patterns, themes, and categories of analysis come from the data; they emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on

them prior to data collection and analysis" (Patton, 1990, p. 390). Following the direction of Patton, I continuously reconsidered and reshaped categories during the data collection and analysis phases. As each interview was conducted, I transcribed the audiotapes of the interview. Once completed, I checked each transcription again against the recording to ensure accuracy. Completed transcripts were mailed to each interviewee for corrections, additions or changes. As the transcriptions were confirmed by participants, I coded them by preliminary categories suggested by the three tools described above (the recommendations of the statewide Safe Schools Program, the "Diagnostic Areas for Multicultural Assessment," and the Continuum of Change Efforts). Next, all interview transcripts and focus group field notes were entered into a software program, Ethnograph, designed for the analysis of text-based data.

Ethnograph

Ethnograph is a program designed to facilitate the analysis of text-based data collected in quantitative research methods by enabling the researcher to code the data and then to sort the coded data in multiple ways (Seidel, Friese & Leonard, 1996). This process created another opportunity to reread all transcripts multiple times. Coding schemes were revised during each generation of review. Ethnograph enhanced the thematic analysis of the data because it allowed me to code and sort the data by organization level, to cluster responses by individual interview questions, to assess themes by organization membership and roles, and to sort the data by key indicators of organization development across all respondents. For example, I was able to sort the data by organizational categories such as all teachers, all administrators, and all students together and by demographic relationships such as all responses by adult and student

status, and by school-based and community-based membership. The data were analyzed for indicators of the stage of multicultural organization development of Select High School. As well as helping to surface the themes in the data, Ethnograph helped to indicate quotes useful in describing indications of individual changes, and for participants' perceptions of institutional leaders and organization-wide changes related to the Safe Schools Program and the Safe Schools Committee of Select High School.

Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Merriam (1988) advise that the use of multiple strategies in a qualitative research design help a researcher to ensure internal validity and the trustworthiness of an investigation. This study incorporated the use of triangulation, peer debriefing, and member checks as systematic means for establishing trustworthiness of the data collection and analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Triangulation

In this study, I used the qualitative research method of triangulation to provide both internal and external checks aimed at the overall enhancement of the integrity of the research process. These procedures took place as the study unfolded, not just at the point of analysis. The first of these internal measures was to compare the views and observations offered by different participants, such as descriptions and explanations they offered for similar events. This was especially important in gaining an understanding of commonalties and differences in perspectives at specific organization levels. I also chose a range of times, days of the week, and situations for participant observations. By conducting observations of settings at different times of the day and days of the week, I

hoped to gain a sufficiently broad exposure to the climate and the typical rhythms of Select High School. Additionally, I collected a range of documents from the Safe Schools Committee, Select High School, and the statewide Safe Schools Program and compared the information contained in them with data collected during interviews and observations. Ultimately, there was a clear reciprocal benefit in utilizing different sources of data and by using multiple methods for gathering the data found in this study as I found each informed and strengthened the other processes.

Peer Debriefing

Patton (1990) suggests that a relationship with a peer can provide an important contribution in a qualitative research study by offering the opportunity to talk about the data collection process and to receive regular feedback on the development of the study on an ongoing basis. Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe this as a process of making explicit what might have remained implicit. Over the duration of the study I developed "peer debriefing" relationships with a selected colleague and a member of the School of Education faculty. Additionally, I sought out selected participants in the study on a regular basis to seek out their comments and feedback on the study as it emerged.

Over the course of the study I developed an ongoing relationship with a fellow doctoral student who is a considerably experienced high school teacher and administrator, is familiar with qualitative research methodology, and identifies as a lesbian. We met on a regular basis over the course of the study depending on the pace of the research and the perceived need (fluctuating between once a month to once a week over the sixteen months of data collection and analysis). These meetings provided the opportunity to

review both the processes and content of the research study as it unfolded, to engage in a dialogue about emerging themes in the data, and to discuss possible interpretations.

Member Checks

Member checking is an important avenue for collaborating with the participants in a research study as well as being a contribution to the strength of the validity of the study (Merriam, 1989). By confirming descriptions, analysis schemes, and interpretations of data with participants in an ongoing manner, I was able to revise categories, descriptions, and themes to reflect more accurately the perceptions of participants at Select High School. These efforts included, for example, sending every participant a complete transcript of their interview and conducting follow-up telephone calls to confirm receipt and acceptance of the transcriptions. I also included member checking of all focus group interviews and participant observations by working with selected individual participants to confirm the themes and categories that emerged from data analysis.

Role of Researcher

In qualitative design and methodology the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection, analysis, and interpretation of findings. For this reason, an examination the researcher's own biases and assumptions becomes an important element of the study. Merriam (1988) suggests that a qualitative investigation that takes these biases into account enhances the analytical framework and methodological clarity, and addresses the transferability and consistency of results. Field notes served as a primary method during data collection and analysis for me to record these kinds of ideas and thoughts in an orderly manner. For example, I used field notes to make notes about participant

observations as well as questions and ideas I had for future follow-up. These notes became also became a repository for ideas about analysis as themes and categories emerged, as well as a place to note when theoretical concepts seemed to link with trends that emerged during data collection. For example, by looking for themes over recorded over the duration of the study I was able to distinguish trends that I had been slow to, consciously or unconsciously, articulate at the moment of the actual event.

Furthermore, Merriam offers that subjectivity, once acknowledged and managed, can be a useful tool in helping one to become attuned, rather than an element to be fought against (Merriam, 1988). For these reasons, it was important to structure a method for consistent reflection and introspection. A primary tool for accomplishing this goal was a reflective journal that was used to record more personal, intimate observations and reflections that emerged over the course of the study. I kept this reflective journal in addition to a field journal. The combination of these two processes offered a rich re-framing of my experiences as a gay high school student and allowed me to sort through biases in my perspectives that led sometimes to a release and sometimes to a recommitment.

I was importantly influenced by three perspectives during this study: my own high school experiences, my commitment to studying an exemplar high school, and my theoretical commitment approaching multicultural organization development and change from a whole systems approach. As a high school student I lived through a range of alienating experiences, many of which reflected the high degree of homophobia in my school and community. As an adult and as a researcher, I acknowledged as I entered this

study that high school was a doubly confusing time for me. This was because I experienced a sort of double cultural displacement. I was a foreigner, literally, as an American living in Germany and as a gay adolescent immersed in an overtly sexist and heterosexist community (a unified military command post in what was then West Germany). These two factors underscored my feelings of being an outsider. In retrospect, I know that I would have really benefited from a more socially supportive school environment.

It is important to acknowledge the conscious choice to focus on a reputational-case that presents an exemplar school. I chose Select High School to study because of the external perception that this was a high school that appeared to be uniquely successful (and thorough) in addressing the school-based needs of gay youth. This study was deliberately designed to investigate and to document how a high school setting, widely perceived to be successful and a role-model, proceeded in their development and implementation of organization-wide changes that address issues related to meeting the school-based needs of gay youth. It was my hope to study a school that is successfully addressing these issues so that other schools might be inspired, and guided, to pursue similar such efforts.

And finally, over my career as a teacher and administrator in education settings I have participated in a variety of multicultural organization change efforts. Charismatic individuals who were influential in some specific interventions, but whose goals ultimately languished sponsored many of which with little visible success over the long term. As a result, I have come to believe strongly in the theoretical orientation that

effective changes in organizations must be placed at the systemic level of change to work, as well as the individual (Jackson & Hardiman, 1994).

In conclusion, I note that I am well able to temper the values described above with the ability to view critically and constructively the data offered in this study. It is not my intention to prove a particular point, or to determine a specific "truth" (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975; Merriam, 1989). Instead, I aim to gather the richest and most accurate description available of the change processes experienced, individually and as an organization, at Select High School related to their Safe Schools Program.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF THE ORGANIZATION'S READINESS FOR CHANGE

Introduction

Chapters Four and Five present the results and analysis of the research. This chapter focuses specifically on context — that is the situations, background and environment relevant to the development and efforts of the Safe Schools Committee. The chapter is organized into two sections. The first section presents an analysis of the readiness for organizational change of Selectown Public School District and Select High School. The second section presents a profile of the Safe School Committee and an examination of its initiatives.

An appreciation of the readiness of Selectown Public School District and Select High School to engage in systemic organization change efforts is an important predicate to understanding the overall impact of the efforts of the Safe Schools Committee. In section one, the readiness for organizational change, I use several lenses of analysis to assess where the system was at the beginning of the change process. First, I use the six indicators of organizational readiness for change offered by Schmuck and Runkel (1994) to develop a baseline description of the overall readiness of the District and High School to support the change initiatives of the Safe Schools Committee. Second, I apply the "Stages in the Development of Multicultural Organizations" (Jackson & Hardiman, 1981b) to build a description of Select High School's organizational stage of multicultural awareness related to gay issues at the start of these efforts. I then employ the "Continuum Model of School Change" (Ouellett, 1996) to offer an additional lens for

gauging the degree to which organization-wide strategies were utilized to address the school-based needs of gay youth. Finally, I examine three socio-historical events that emerged from data sources as contributing significantly to the readiness of the Selectown Public School District to engage in the change initiatives of the Safe Schools Committee. The school district learned important lessons form prior efforts to respond to the changing demographics of Selectown, the AIDS/HIV pandemic, and the process of the adoption of comprehensive health education.

In the second section, I present a description and analysis of Select High School's Safe Schools Committee. This section includes a profile of the development and membership of the committee and a description of committee goals. I conclude the section using the four recommendations of the Governor's Committee on Safe Schools for Gay and Lesbian Students to analyze how selected activities implemented by the Safe Schools Committee address or exceed each of the four recommendations.

My intent in this chapter is to "set the stage" by describing the complex context and processes of change that preceded and, in many ways, initiated the work of the Safe Schools Committee. The chapter draws upon the full range of data — documents, participant observation, interviews, and focus groups — to weave together a variety of events into a holistic view of readiness for change over time in one school district and one school. In Chapter Five, I will focus more on the report of participants' views of the specific contributions of the Safe Schools Committee to several dimensions of change in Selectown Public School District and Select High School.

Select High School's Organization Readiness for Change

The organization development literature offers several models for assessing an organization's level of readiness for change (Schmuck & Miles, 1971; Schmuck & Runkel, 1994). I relied most heavily on the work of Schmuck and Runkel because they have applied these models to education organizations. They underscore the importance of assessing the degree of readiness for change in an organization because,

> "people are likely to take a step that is a reasonable distance beyond where they are now, but that they will give up in hopelessness if the step stretches them too far, and they will give up in boredom if they are asked to retrace steps already familiar to them." (Schmuck & Miles, 1971, p. 378).

Schmuck and Miles (1971) describe six conditions useful in the assessment of a system's readiness for change:

1. the presence of a critical mass of people dissatisfied with the current organization structure
2. the support of critical resources (money, know-how, and administrative endorsement)
3. stability of key staff
4. norms supporting collaborative group work
5. skill in collaborative work group
6. rewards for risk-taking.

Each of these conditions appeared to be met at Select High School, to one degree or another, at the outset of the work of the Safe Schools Committee.

Critical Mass

A variety of administrators, educators, community members, and students were concerned about how the school was responding (or more precisely, not responding) to issues related to the school-based needs of gay and lesbian youth. On a variety of organization levels within Select High School there was movement to address the school-based needs of gay youth. Simultaneously, social service providers in the community were becoming more educated about the needs of gay youth and were beginning to look around for ways to intervene effectively to support them.

Two key initiatives within the school system were the introduction of education and development opportunities for both students and teachers. As detailed previously, the superintendent and the director of physical and health education had been considering the health related issues of gay youth in schools since the release of the report from Health and Human Services (Gibson, 1989). Their efforts began with the installation of a comprehensive health program for all students in the school district. At the same time, Selectown sponsored teachers to attend the Massachusetts Department of Education Safe Schools workshops specifically on gay youth issues.

The superintendent of Selectown Public School District and the director of health and physical education were willing to initiate changes within the school system as well. For example, before the efforts of the Safe Schools Committee began they incorporated a workshop on gay youth into a Select High School teacher in-service day. Because they were afraid teachers would avoid a session with "gay" in the title they named the workshop "Health Curriculum Issues." As predicted by the superintendent and director of health and physical education, the workshop was well received in the end even though the

teachers who participated in it did not find out the real content of the workshop until it was underway. As will be presented in more detail later, this was an example of how important it was that the introduction of efforts to address gay youth issues in the school setting was done in a manner designed to gain the most support within the school system. However, this strategy could easily have backfired for example if teachers and administrators had felt tricked or coerced.

At this same time, a variety of community organizers and social service agency personnel had begun to address gay youth issues within their own organizations. Much like in the school system, this effort involved staff training and development, a review of practices, and a reevaluation of services available to meet the needs of gay youth. Community members, like the advisor of the local gay youth group, also had initiated contact with school personnel related to the needs of gay youth. As a result, the Crises Task Force at Select High School had begun to address the issues gay youth face in school settings. They did this by bringing in consultants from the community such as the advisor of the community gay youth group. In fact, school personnel at this time had limited direct information with which to understand what gay and lesbian students in Select High School were experiencing. Ironically, the most natural resources for this information, gay and lesbian adults and students at Select High School, perceived the environment to be too hostile to be open.

During this period, gay and lesbian teachers in the Selectown Public School System also had formed a community-based social support organization for themselves. At this time, they felt the risks were far too great to be openly identified as gay or lesbian

within the Selectown school system. However, two teachers had begun to identify themselves publicly as lesbian to selected colleagues and supervisors within their buildings. About this same time, students too had begun to move towards organizing an on-campus group gay support group. Much like the lesbian and gay adults in the system, students had to meet off-campus in a community-based group to enable them to meet peers, gain support, and explore their emerging identities. These community-based groups provided pivotal social contact and support not available in school.

> "Meeting other kids. That was a big thing. Because you know, the GSA wasn't established then, first of all. And at that point, the school just didn't feel safe at all, didn't feel like a safe environment at all." (Leslie).

Finally, just before the formation of the Safe Schools Committee two lesbian students decided to launch a student group that focused on general issues of racism, social diversity, and tolerance in Select High School. However, gay and lesbian students quickly became dissatisfied with the broad focus of the organization and moved to form a Gay Straight Alliance to specifically address gay and lesbian youth issues. Students described it this way:

> "We were just trying to focus on different issues but we were constantly wanting to focus on Gay Rights, and they were constantly wanting to focus on African-American history, so it kinda' — that just didn't work. And eventually I, you know, we just said, 'This isn't meeting our needs'." (Melanie).

Over several years a range of activities and interventions in the school district contributed to building this critical mass necessary for change. Teacher and staff development opportunities at the school district and state levels, school linkages to

community resources, and the organization of community and school-based gay youth support services worked together to build the momentum needed for change.

Support of Critical Resources

The Department of Education's Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Youth offered substantial resources to support local school-based efforts. The Department of Education's program designated funds for a mini-grant program, provided staff members who could act as consultants and skilled facilitators, offered teacher-training workshops, and developed and distributed resource materials to school-based programs. Teachers and administrators from individual schools were able to apply for Department of Education funds on an annual basis to support their local program and training goals. These grants did not require matching funds from the school district and could be used relatively flexibly (e.g., purchase of food items was allowed). This created an almost immediate opportunity for interested staff members to launch in-school efforts without stressing the financial resources of the district. Because the funds were coming from the Department of Education program, there was no need to convince a principal or superintendent to supply anything other than their administrative approval of a committee or group that could guide the development of school-based initiatives.

Stability of Staff

The stability of key staff members in the Selectown Public School District facilitated the launch of the Safe Schools Committee. Such personnel as the superintendent and director of physical and health education for the district, the director of curriculum and staff development, the high school principal, and all five members of

the Safe Schools Committee had been well established in the school system for a substantial period of time. Additionally, they brought the skill and talent of veteran educators that lent stability of a different kind. For example, if a person had fewer actual years spent in the district, she balanced this with expertise gained in other large public school systems. People at each level of the organization who were instrumental in launching the Safe Schools Committee were repeatedly described by others in the system as "seasoned" and "savvy." They were viewed as professionals who were willing to stand by a cherished principle (e.g., all students deserve equity and respect). This group also carried a high degree of credibility and social cache across the district and state with their peers in the school system, community members, and colleagues.

Descriptions of these key staff by administrators, other educators, students, and parents focused on traits that included being perceived as competent in their jobs, student-focused, and committed to excellence. Additionally, a strong consensus emerged across all levels of the organization that these people were team players, highly skilled communicators, supportive of leadership in others, and adept at working effectively within a bureaucracy. I observed that these participants were also a group not easily rattled. Perhaps this was a function of their skill and experience, but I also would suggest that this is a reflection of an organization system that stays pretty "calm" as a group. I will explore this more in the next section on collaborative group norms and skills.

Norms and Skills Supporting Collaborative Work Groups

The culture and norms of the Selectown Public School District strongly supported collaborative group norms and skills before the work of the Safe Schools Committee

began. According to Schmuck and Runkel a norm exists, "...when, within a collection of people, certain ranges of behavior are approved, others are disapproved, and still others are neither approved nor disapproved" (Schmuck & Runkel, 1994, p. 22). In the Select High School and the Selectown Public School system in general, I identified some values that were strongly held across every level of the organization. For example, administrators, teachers, community members, and students all reported a cluster of beliefs I refer to as an "egalitarian" value set. While never explicitly stated, these values were indicated across interviews with administrators, educators, Safe Schools Committee members, and school committee members. They included a belief in the importance of equity in school services, access to public school, safe environments, and a baseline of respect for all students.

Many of the senior administrators and teachers involved with the Safe Schools Committee also had gained experience in working collaboratively, especially with community stakeholders, from prior experience with other "hot button" topics like desegregation and religious rights. In interviews these administrators reported experiences ranging from responding to Christian Coalition and anti-abortion group demands to efforts to racially desegregate their school district. While no one reported prior experiences in working with school-based gay youth issues (other then the comprehensive health curriculum), many saw a link between these prior experiences and current efforts to address the school-based needs of gay youth.

One way that these prior experiences prepared school system administrators and educators is that they required participants to make decisions based on an examination of

the relationship between personal values and professional responsibilities. Another way is that they required identifying and following moral principles (e.g., justice and equity for all), and the careful implementation of controversial policies. These prior experiences also prepared them for the kind of scrutiny and criticism that efforts to address gay youth issues in schools today can bring upon individuals and schools from community members and staff, the media, and some parents.

This was a group of educators who communicated regularly across the organization (and community). They included as many people as possible in the information exchange process. For example, members of the committee would individually or as a group meet with the superintendent and building principals to keep them updated on the activities of the Safe Schools Program. To do this sometimes meant meeting with administrators around the normal schedule such as in the early morning or early evening. Although these meetings were never required, they nurtured an investment by multiple stakeholders in the change initiatives. These behaviors were modeled by senior administrators when they demonstrated willingness (and skills) to effectively delegate authority and leadership while also shielding individual personnel (as much as possible) from personal attacks. Given the range and depth of prior experiences, this was also a group that was realistic about change processes. They understood that in new endeavors there will always be mistakes and that systemic changes take time. A clear consensus emerged from interviews with senior administrators that staff members should be rewarded and supported for genuine efforts to achieve the goals of the system, even if they fail initially.

A sensibility of safeguarding the perceived "fairness" of a public school was reflected in the practice of regularly including parents, community members, students, teachers, and other interested parties on community advisory committees. These advisory committees were utilized by the superintendent and the school committee to ensure consistent and timely opportunity for representative participation in important decisions about the school and curriculum. The crucial role of advisory committees can be seen in the success of the adoption of comprehensive health education. Advisory committees ensured fairly democratic participation in decision-making processes of the school system by providing a defined, meaningful system for both the majority and the minority view to be considered. It also provided one more in-house system for the criticisms and appeals of any minority view to be heard and responded to by school personnel.

Norms of collaboration were also evident in other important initiatives within the district. There is a strong history of community participation on other important issues like drug and alcohol education and programs to address dating violence, sexual harassment, and gangs. Central administrators, building principals, teachers, specialists, and students were consistently able to name numerous community-wide and service agency-based affiliations because of their collaborative efforts to address common concerns. A typical example of this commitment to collaborative work can be seen in processes used to conceive and develop the Selectown Public School District's Strategic Plan.

> "It was a community project that had forty people on it. And it took us — we had an outside facilitator for the first three days. And it was during a blizzard. It was wonderful. But anyway, that got accepted. And then last year we had over two hundred people writing individual action plans that would facilitate us meeting the five objectives that the committee had chosen." (Fran).

Another important example of collaboration is that of the Safe Schools Committee with the group working on sexual harassment education, prevention, and intervention. This collaboration was particularly supportive of the initiatives of the Safe Schools Committee because it tied the goals of the two programs together in a mutually reinforcing and supportive manner. Each program served to support the other by incorporating aspects into their own activities, programs, and materials. There was also an emerging awareness that ignoring the gay and lesbian students at Select High School was in conflict with other important values of the school culture. Members of the Safe Schools Committee were able to effectively educate the administration, teachers, parents, and community members about how support for the work of the committee related to the values already endorsed by the system (e.g., a safe environment, equal access, and respect and tolerance for all). These values underscore how the committee was able to integrate their work with the formal and the informal expectations for behaviors, rewards, and punishments in the system. The work of the Safe Schools Committee was supported because, in principle, it was perceived as directly supporting other key values of the system. As described by the director of curriculum and staff development, their work was seen as directly in line with other beliefs and goals of the school system.

> "We have a set of belief statements that our strategic plan has put together. And I think these individuals are exemplifying those belief systems. That everyone is deserving of respect and everyone has worth. And, that we as adults have an obligation to promote that worth in students. I think they're living our belief systems." (Fran).

Risk Taking

Assessment of risk-taking behaviors is more difficult. The presence of a spirit of risk-taking emerged during participant observations and in interviews, although few participants actually identified it as such. The organization of most public school systems militates against even talking about "risk-taking." This language often raises red flags with school committees and central administrators seeking to avoid controversy. However, I found a norm of risk-taking in every level of this organization. There was willingness on the part of the system to support and reward risk-taking behaviors up and down the ladder from the central administrative staff to students. In fact, the director of curriculum and staff development spoke directly to this when she said,

> "I got the feeling from Dr. Meyer who hired me and from Dr. Jones, now, that they really — that they are risk takers themselves. And that this is a characteristic that they value." (Fran).

When asked about his perception of these kinds of behaviors, the superintendent insisted that this was not a behavioral goal that could be easily encouraged. In fact, his perception was that,

> "…it's something that you have to display yourself. And you have to let people fail. And then you've got to support them when they fail." (Alex).

An exemplar of this support for risk-taking behavior that involved two high school health education teachers and two administrators is detailed in the next chapter.

There is every indication form data collected that Selectown Public School District and Select High School certainly met to some degree each of the criteria of readiness for organization change as described by Schmuck and Runkel (1994) before the efforts of the Safe Schools Committee began. As an organization, the school system had

established norms supporting both collaborative skills and work groups. Present throughout the school system was also a spirit of risk-taking. Overall, the system's strongest preparation was in the areas of stability of staff, norms of collaboration, and skills in collaboration. There was also present, in a less-defined way, a critical mass, and support of critical resources. These distinctions bear a brief explanation.

There was the presence of a "critical mass" of people representing almost every level of the school system dissatisfied with the status quo related to gay youth issues. The Department of Education Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students offered substantial support (funding and consultants) to support their efforts. However, as will be discussed further in chapter four, this general level of dissatisfaction was grounded for many key administrators and educators in the discomfort they felt in the dissonance between their values and the experiences of gay youth in the system. It would be more accurate to say that, at least initially, they were compelled to action due to being dissatisfied with this contradiction of values and expectations more so than how gay-related issues were being responded to in the school system. For example, there was a shared value in the school system that public education should be safe and accessible to all. Any student not safe or not having equitable access to the school was cause for action, regardless of the topic of homosexuality.

The support of critical resources is an area where it bears a note that while the system did support the efforts of the Safe Schools Committee, very little in terms of financial and program support was asked directly of the school district. A well-respected and veteran staff group emerged to form a stable voluntary subgroup for change.

However, as will be described in chapter four, the funding support came from the mini-grants awarded by the Department of Education Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students. Overall, these six factors combined to lay an organization foundation for a change initiative related to meeting the school-based needs of gay youth.

Select High School's Organization Stage of Multicultural Awareness

The next component of readiness I examined was the degree to which the school system was aware of and responsive to multicultural and diversity issues at the system level. The second perspective used to assess the Selectown Public School District's readiness for change was the Organizational Stages of Multicultural Awareness model developed by Jackson and Hardiman (1981a). As detailed in chapter two of this study, this model offers a description of multicultural organization development along a six-stage continuum. These organization stages describe movement from a completely exclusionary organization to a multicultural one. The six stages are identified as:

1. the exclusionary organization
2. the club
3. the compliance organization
4. the affirmative action organization
5. the redefining organization
6. the multicultural organization.

This model has most often been applied to race and gender diversity in organizations. However, it offers two perspectives useful in describing an organization's perspective on sexual orientation. First, the model asks the organization to clarify and

build upon beliefs it currently holds that underpin multicultural efforts. Secondly, it offers help in understanding and managing the change processes required to become multicultural organizations (Katz, 1989).

Applying this model to Select High School indicates that this organization hovered somewhere between the first and the second stages, the Exclusionary Club and the White Male Club, when the efforts of the Safe Schools Committee began. The difficulty in assigning the school to one category is that attributes of both stages were simultaneously present in the organization and the experiences of gay youth depended entirely upon which students, administrators, teachers, and parents were involved. However, a range of attitudes and behaviors were present throughout the system that caused gay youth to experience repercussions ranging from problematic to tragic.

On the one hand, there were absolutely no formal or informal means of support for gay and lesbian youth within the school system at the beginning of the Safe Schools Committee's work which, on first glance, would place the school at stage one. However, the efforts required to install a comprehensive health curriculum (especially the resolve of school leaders to include homosexuality in the curriculum) demonstrated that the leadership of the school district was not trying to advocate a kind of heterosexual "supremacy," as would be expected in the exclusionary stage. Jackson and Hardiman (1981a) describe the second stage, the White Male Club, as an organization that accepts only those minorities that wish to actively assimilate into existing organization norms and that "share the right perspective" (i.e., agree with the values, attitudes, and beliefs of those in power). In this school setting, this would mean that gay and lesbian youth were

ostensibly welcome to attend school but were expected to hide their identities and to actively conform to the heterosexual norms, behaviors, and sensibilities of the school. And indeed, at the cusp of the work of the Safe Schools Committee at Select High School, lesbian and gay students had to conform to these norms, that is to "pass" convincingly as heterosexually-identified to avoid being harassed or ostracized at school. To be at a more inclusive stage on the continuum, Selectown Public School District would have had to demonstrate that efforts were in place to consciously include gay and lesbians in the school system, even if the climate was not hospitable. In the upcoming section, the "Lisa" scenario exemplifies the attributes of Jackson and Hardiman's stages one and two.

Select High School's Place on the Continuum of School Change Model

A third perspective on readiness for school change specifically related to gay youth issues is the Continuum of School Change developed by me (Ouellett, 1996) and detailed in chapter two. It identifies a six-stage continuum from denial and avoidance to proactivity and systemic change. At the time that Selectown Public School District and Select High School founded their Safe Schools Committee the way that they addressed gay youth issues reflected the low level of intervention found in most public school settings. Administrators and educators in the school district were unresponsive to the quality of the experiences gay youth were having in their system. Interventions and support services were limited to reacting to individuals in crisis. Student complaints about systemic factors, such as a climate of harassment, were marginalized or outright denied. The Continuum of School Change Strategies indicates interventions limited to reactive support of individual students (whether gay or perceived to be gay) in school settings are

best understood as reinforcing the heterosexist context of the overall school organization. This is characterized on the continuum as category one, "denial." However, because there was already some evidence of attempts to change specific behaviors of the organization at this time, the second category of the continuum, "avoidance," best describes Selectown Public School District and High School at the start of the Safe Schools Committee. The experiences of Lisa, a student at Select High School before the formation of the Safe Schools committee, offers one example of the nature of this school setting at that time. Lisa's story shows that the organizational stage of multicultural awareness, the awareness of gay youth issues, and the institutional commitment to systemic change strategies to respond to the needs of gay youth in the school system were low at the beginning of the work of the Safe Schools Committee.

Lisa

I first heard about Lisa in an interview with the school psychologist, Patti. She told how she found Lisa one afternoon sitting outside the school's Student Support Center crying. While participants were initially reluctant to tell me much about Lisa, out of respect for Lisa's privacy, I eventually pieced the information about the specifics of Lisa's experiences together. Over the course of weeks the tires on Lisa's car had been repeatedly slashed. Some afternoons she would leave school to find as many as all four tires damaged beyond repair. Additionally, Lisa did not feel she could turn to her parents for emotional or financial help at that time. So, she was having the car repaired and the tires replaced on her own. When the school psychologist brought this to the attention of the high school administration there was willingness to support finding Lisa counseling support services. However, senior administrators were reluctant to acknowledge that the

vandalism directed at Lisa was a result of homophobia. For example, senior administrators at first refused to make an exception that would allow Lisa to park her car in the faculty parking lot. They believed that she could use the school bus. However, the school bus is often were the worst kinds of anti-gay behaviors take place and is perceived of as patently unsafe by lesbian and gay youth.

Lisa's experiences had a tremendous impact on a variety of administrators and educators in this school setting. Her willingness to share her experiences also helped to galvanize change efforts within the school because she took homophobia and heterosexism out of the realm of vague concepts and placed it squarely in the concrete realm of a student's real pain.

> "The fact that there were students in the school who were suffering this much made it very…it was very clear and you couldn't argue with it. You know, in terms of the administrators, or anything else." (Patti).

Lisa's experiences highlighted the human cost of the extraordinary pressure on gay youth to conform to the heterosexist norm at Select High School. Her experiences also marked the first time many adults in the system began to make a correlation between gay youth issues and other deeply held values (e.g., student focused schools, safety, access). As will be described in the next chapter, were a similar incident to recur today, the system and the administrators would respond quite differently.

Important Socio-Historical Events Prior to Select High School's Change Initiatives

As I collected data, several themes emerged that indicated particular events helped significantly to prepare the way for the work of the committee. These factors emerged as themes across documents, interviews, and participant observations. Most of the

information about and insight into the importance of prior experiences came from interviews with senior administrators and two community members (and parents) who had served as school committee members. These educators and community members were the ones most intimately involved in many of these processes at the organization wide level and so were the best reporters of the stories, anecdotes, and observations related to current change efforts. The vividness of these experiences for participants, even after perhaps a decade or more had elapsed, made an important point about the cumulative impact change initiatives can have on organization culture, even when the specific event is long past.

One such example surfaced in interviews with an ex-school committee member and with central administrative staff members. The "red book" story exemplifies how prior experiences can influence change efforts today. I first heard about this from an ex-school committee member who explained to me that a previous school committee member, who served before him, had worked very hard to get comprehensive health education accepted by the district. Some headway was made at the committee stage and efforts were underway to collect potential curriculum materials for review. However, the effort was fatally wounded when conservative parents, who had not been sufficiently included in the process, reviewed the suggested curriculum materials (the red book) and became incensed. When pressed for further explanation, the ex-school committee member said he didn't recall any more of the details of the incident. The lesson he drew from that experience was that it,

> "…was important to note that there was probably not enough public input early on as to what needed to be done." (Tom).

While these prior efforts mainly took place before his tenure on the school committee, the incident still resonated for him today. The point being that the "red book" story lives on in the organization as a symbolic example of the intensity and fragility of change processes. This story underscored for me that past change efforts, whether deemed a success or a failure, live on in systems and can have subtle but important influences on current initiatives. It also underscored the advice from multicultural organization development practitioners that the inclusion of as many stakeholders as possible (including community activists) is essential to the success of change initiatives.

In this study I identified three historical factors that contributed to preparing Selectown Public School District for engaging in the work of the Safe Schools Committee. These factors include the shifting demographics of Selectown during the last ten years, the context of the national AIDS/HIV pandemic during the mid-1980s and 1990s, the adoption of comprehensive health education for the district.

Shifting Demographics

Selectown was historically a predominately white and blue-collar community. However, this has changed a lot in the last decade as the town has become an attractive "bedroom" community for middle class families seeking relief from the high housing costs of the greater Boston area. The racial composition of Selectown has also changed markedly with an influx of immigrants from Asian and Latin American countries and members of American Asian, Latino, and African families, as well. The teachers and administrators at Select High School are experiencing this shift in demographics in the composition of the school and in their lives in the community as well.

> "I certainly see a much more compatible community here with a lot of diversity, seemingly working very well together, at least from the religious standpoint. The cultural issues, I think, are beginning to make themselves felt. I know that when I bought my house, the people had lived there for I guess twenty-five years. And they were bemoaning the fact that the town isn't the way it used to be and that all "these people" — whoever "these people" are — they're coming in droves, and it's just not the same." (Fran).

Today, Selectown is an increasingly diverse community economically, racially, and socially. Therefore, responding successfully to issues of "diversity," representing the broadest definition of this term, has necessarily become a core component of the mission of this school district. This has required the almost completely white school staff to reconsider how "business as usual" may exclude important voices from the dialogue and has challenged them to make new efforts to include all of the stakeholders in the community.

The process of developing community input to the development and implementation of the current five-year plan for the school district highlights the nature of these changes. The school district sponsored six employees to receive training on strategic planning and then to act as the initial nucleus for a district-wide planning effort. The initial group of six was eventually expanded to include about thirty people including teachers, administrators, ten community people, and ten parents. The central administration sent literature about the plan out to the community. Additionally, they went out to talk personally to many groups to solicit volunteers. They sought out feedback and community participation from the groups in town traditionally recognized as important stakeholders. However, the local newspaper, in writing about the planning process, criticized the process as doomed because, as they pointed out, representatives from the local Hispanic, Asian, and African-American communities were not included. In

this case, the superintendent took full responsibility for the oversight and personally apologized. What is interesting in this example is that the school administrators immediately admitted their mistake, got expert advice about how to better connect with these communities, sought out more volunteers, reconstituted the committees, and reconvened the groups to redo the goal setting exercise. As the director of curriculum and staff development related, this became an important lesson in the changing demographics of Selectown.

> "Oh, yeah. It taught me a lesson. It taught me that you have to go to the venues of the groups; not expect the groups to come to your venue. I mean, we made all the traditional rounds, the Rotary, Better Business or the Chamber of Commerce, but what we didn't do was go to the churches. And for a lot of cultures, that's the heart of the community. And we, I guess, didn't find key people in the communities to help us. We were trying to do it all. And those were mistakes. And I think we've learned from those mistakes." (Fran).

This experience reflects how members of the school system demonstrated another important value in the system, a genuine commitment to collaboration with community stakeholders. This will be addressed further later in this chapter.

AIDS/HIV

The national health crises AIDS/HIV posed for youth first came to public attention in the mid-1980s. As it became clear that the risks of AIDS/HIV were never going to be limited only to the adult gay male population, troubled educators, parents, and community leaders of Selectown struggled to frame a school-based response to this health crisis. In many of the same ways as did other towns, the Selectown Public School District found the process of agreeing on a suitable educational response to this epidemic a highly emotionalized, politicized, and contentious process.

Incurable illness provided compelling motivation. Sexual contact alone might not have galvanized the tremendous amount of commitment, perseverance, and emotional stamina it took to work through this process. For example, over time this process required a sustained public dialogue on such traditionally private matters as sexuality and sexual orientation. It also required a shift from the traditional position that sexuality education should be the sole province of the parent to a new stance that youth must be educated to protect their health and that this responsibility must be shared with the school system. This process was never unanimous and many advocates ended the debates holding fast to the same views they had when they entered them. However, it is important to note that this process precipitated a public discussion of sexuality and sexual behavior never seen before in this school district. For example, the school committee held protracted discussions on the suitability of distributing condoms at the high school. These discussions made it clear that, given the impossibility of talking about AIDS/HIV removed from its devastating consequences in the gay community, participants would be required to confront a complex range of values and attitudes (e.g., attitudes towards homosexuality). What might have appeared initially to be simple decisions (i.e., yea or nay to condom distribution) soon moved into complicated, highly emotional territory.

The United States Department of Health and Human Services published at about this same time a report that included a specific look at youth suicide (Gibson, 1989). The findings in this report raised concern nationwide that subgroups of youth, particularly gays and lesbians, were at particularly high risks (Gibson, 1989). This evidence that gay youth were at increased risk for suicide during adolescence startled the superintendent of

the school district at that time. While this report did not prompt an intervention at that time, it did educate and raise awareness levels.

> "...The thing that kind of sparked it all in my mind was in 1989, there was a report that came up and talked about teenage suicide from Health and Human Services. And statistics showed that there was a high incidence of — or higher incidence — of suicide attempts and successes amongst kids who were gay and lesbian. And at that point, I said, 'Gee'..." (Alex).

Comprehensive Health Education

During the 1980s and early 1990s there were several efforts made to adopt a comprehensive approach to health education in the Selectown Public School District. A complete discussion of these events is necessarily beyond the scope of this study. However, it may be useful to note that this school district's discussions were set against a growing statewide and national debate over how best to address major public health issues. Research on such public health trends noted the exponential growth in the spread of sexually transmitted disease in teens, the escalating rate of teen pregnancy, rising drug and alcohol abuse, and the spread of AIDS/HIV. These issues raised serious concerns and one response was to address education and prevention efforts directly to adolescents.

In Massachusetts, the Department of Education began at this time to recommend comprehensive health education for public schools. Comprehensive health education expands more limited traditional approaches to include attention to health education, physical education, nutrition services, guidance and psychological services, parent and community involvement, staff awareness training, healthy school environment, and nursing services. However, even with a comprehensive health education program, many decisions are left to the local school committee and community. Therefore the way that

the curriculum and materials were written, controversial issues like homosexuality could be easily dropped out if so desired. The director of physical and health education for the school district recalled that when he first arrived the district did,

> "…have a health curriculum, but it never dealt with human sexuality and it never dealt with mental health. They always threw those controversial-type issues out. So when I got the job in '86, I said that we were going to have a comprehensive health curriculum to include all of those issues." (Paul).

Selectown, like many Massachusetts communities, had parents with strongly opposing opinions about just what should be addressed in school settings and at what age. This required a great deal of public education about the need for such a program, public participation in the design of the curriculum and the careful choice of curriculum materials (e.g., textbooks, videos, and related resources), and commitments from school administrators to the principles that would guide these efforts. For example, comprehensive sexuality education falls under the curriculum for health education.

An important underlying controversy is about whether or not the curriculum would advocate an abstinence-based approach to sex education. In the Selectown School Committee's health advisory sub-committee discussions, an ex-school committee member reported that three positions emerged on how sexuality education should be addressed in the Selectown public schools. The political and socially conservative position held that the school-based curriculum should not address sexuality at all. Topics should be limited to physical fitness and basic anatomy. This group believed the health education curriculum should avoid anything to do with sexual behaviors, decision-making, and expressions of sexuality as these topics as best left to parents. The political and socially liberal position held that schools should provide a complete education about

sexuality, sexual behaviors, and related decision-making skills for students. The third position was in the middle of these two extremes. This group felt that some students might not get sufficient information because their parents might not be comfortable enough to communicate it or be able to do it as effectively as teachers. This position also advocated that there needed to be a baseline of information about health and sexuality made available to all students while respecting parents concerns about the nature of the information presented to their children.

The roles of national organizations with community membership, such as conservative religious groups, are unclear in the case of Selectown Public School District. While such groups did not appear to play substantial public roles, several participants suggested that there might have been some connections between conservative parents and these groups. For example, representatives of right wing political groups might have coached some community members and to have given them access to many of the materials prepared by such groups.

> "There was suspicion that one of these parents might have been directly linked to these national groups. The involvement of the Christian right was unclear, but as time went on it seemed impossible for it not to be understood that they were behind a lot of what was up. Concerned Citizens or something. Beverly LaHaye's group." (Emily).

The same was true of the influence of politically liberal groups. Planned Parenthood and other community organizations, other school districts, and groups with similarly invested interests (e.g., textbook publishing companies) supplied pertinent information, contacts, and suggestions for where to find additional resources. Often, the importance of the contributions of community-based groups from any political faction

was hard to determine because of the deliberate efforts made on all sides to remain anonymous. For example, one ex-school committee member recalled how she became used to seeing her name in almost every issue of the local paper for one reason or another. However, she was surprised the first time she received an anonymous letter giving her advice about resources to pursue. The novelty of this soon wore off as she reported frequently receiving information sent anonymously through the mail during the process of hearings on comprehensive health education. Comprehensive health education was implemented in the Selectown Public School District on a pilot basis in the1992-1993 academic year. At the end of the year the piloted curriculum was evaluated and revised by the administration and the health advisory committee to respond to concerns expressed by some parents.

The decisive factor in the adoption of comprehensive health education seems to have been the leadership and perseverance demonstrated by central administrators and school committee members. For example, the director of health and physical education for the district saw the move to a comprehensive curriculum as related to principles about education and respect and, therefore, an important commitment and to stand behind. He was concerned about the needs of gay and lesbian youth in the school setting and saw the inclusion of this topic in the comprehensive health curriculum as the best approach. Additionally, he felt that this approach offered the best preparation possible for all students. While this was a politically controversial stance to take, he was committed to comprehensive health education and to including homosexuality as one topic to be covered. He played a pivotal role in the development and implementation of the curriculum review and policy-making processes with the school committee. For example,

he was the senior administrator that acted as the bridge between the school committee, the community-based advisory committee, and educators in the school district. He was also the one who responded to inquiries (and challenges) from school committee members, parents, and the press.

> "I made it a point at that school committee that we will be discussing homosexuality, that I feel that it's important, that there is understanding about homosexuality and what teens are dealing with as they grow up. And that we shouldn't be afraid to talk about it. There are a lot of kids that will be experiencing this. And the suicide issues at that — in the homosexual population, that was a real focus of mine, making sure that that was included in the curriculum." (Paul).

Strong leadership by the superintendent, the director of physical and health education, and the active participation of a community advisory committee, enabled a comprehensive health curriculum to be implemented in the Selectown Public School District. The experiences gained from this process, plus those gained from responding to the shifting demographics of the town and the national context of the AIDS/HIV epidemic, contributed to the readiness of the Selectown Public School District to support the initiatives of the Safe Schools Committee. Administrators, educators, parents, community members and students were able to learn important skills, to clarify the relationship between personal values and school-related responsibilities, and develop effective strategies for responding to organization change. In the next section I present a description of the Selectown Public School District's Safe Schools Committee. I discuss how this committee was able to capitalize upon the organization's readiness for change to successfully implement a range of initiatives to meet the school-based needs of gay youth in their school district.

Selectown Public School District's Safe Schools Committee

Out of this state of organizational readiness for change Selectown Public School District's Safe Schools Committee was formed. In the next section I describe how the Safe Schools Committee was formed, the members of the committee, and selected initiatives. This section also includes an overview of how the efforts of the Safe Schools Committee addressed the recommendations of the Governor's Commission on Safe Schools for Gay and Lesbian Students.

Development of the Safe Schools Committee

On December 10, 1993 then Governor William Weld signed into law a bill that made Massachusetts the first state in the United States to place gay and lesbian youth in public schools under the same protection as that promised to students based on race, color, sex, religion, or national origin. This amendment to the student's rights law and the allocation of resources to local schools via the Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Youth are important changes in the larger social context of Massachusetts. These statewide changes were crucial to efforts by senior administrators, educators, students, and community member's to systemically address the needs of gay youth at Select High School.

The committee first began to coalesce when four staff members from three different schools in the district attended a workshop sponsored by the Department of Education Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Youth. All four participants attended the Department of Education workshop as volunteers. Two of the original participants found out about the workshop from a community member (the adult advisor

of the local gay youth group) and two were encouraged to attend by their supervisor, the director of health education. These educators went to the workshop because professional ethics and personal values motivated them. They knew students in their school who needed help and they were committed to helping them, even though they were not clear about exactly how to do it.

> "There were students in pain. We didn't know what exactly to do, but we knew we wanted to do something." (Anne).

These four people who first attended the Department of Education Safe Schools Program workshop knew each other casually before the session. However, they reported that they were somewhat surprised to see each other at the workshop because they did not know that there were other educators within the system with similar interests in addressing gay youth issues. As a result of their experience in this first workshop, these four educators recruited a fifth colleague (who had served on the Crisis Task Force and who intervened with Lisa when she was found crying outside the Student Support Center) to join them. Together, these five staff members formed the Safe Schools Committee for Select High School.

Profile of the Safe Schools Committee

The Select High School Safe Schools Committee marks its formal inception as December 1993. The committee consists of five educators. As might be expected, each member brought unique skills and contributions to the committee. For the purposes of this study, however, I highlight traits that were consistent across members of the committee instead of describing uniquely individual contributions. These dimensions

included personal and professional skills, range of expertise on gay youth and change strategies, and shared values.

The members of the Safe Schools Committee were described universally by administrators, students, teachers, and community members as well liked for a number of reasons. For example, members were genuinely well respected by students, educators, administrators, community stakeholders, and state consultants. They were perceived to be caring, highly competent, genuinely committed to student welfare, and savvy about how to work effectively within their schools. The director of curriculum and staff development for the district put it best in her description of them.

> "I think all five of them are terribly sensitive, very much sure of themselves and have a good strong self-concept of who they are, which allows them to take risks and I think they're risk-takers, all five of them. They're genuinely likable people. It's unusual to like every body in a group, but I really can't think of one of those women that isn't fun to be with, very professional, very articulate, very knowledgeable, and just feels like they're an advocate for kids." (Fran).

Committee members represented a range of professional responsibilities and personal experiences. Two members were physical education teachers, while the three other members were a school social worker, a psychologist, and a guidance counselor. Together, they represented three schools within the district: a high school, two middle schools. Three members identified as heterosexuals and two members identified as lesbians.

The five members of the Safe Schools Committee brought a range of expertise on gay youth issues and school change strategies to this effort. For example, the two lesbians brought to the committee an invaluable, highly sophisticated, personal understanding of

gay issues in the school setting as well as personal collections of materials and resources, and extensive networks with community members also invested in addressing the school-based needs of gay youth. However, they were not working on gay youth issues in the high school setting and that was the focus of much of the organization change efforts of the Safe Schools Committee. The other three members of the committee had limited personal experiences with gay and lesbian issues; however, they brought with them other essential resources such as extensive experience in the high school setting and strong networks with community social service agencies working with gay and lesbian high school students. Another important quality each shared was that they approached the initiatives of the Safe Schools Committee with the idea that they needed to learn as much themselves as they were asking others to do so. Their orientation to teaching and learning about the school-based needs of gay youth was one of collaboration.

Members of the Safe Schools Committee brought a high degree of personal investment to their work. Three of the five original members of the Safe Schools Committee reported that they had had personal interest in or experiences with gay and lesbian issues prior to their involvement with the Safe Schools Committee for Select High School. For example, two of the committee members identified as lesbians most of their lives and were keenly interested in the welfare of the gay and lesbian students that may be coming through the school district today. Another member has an extended family member who is lesbian. Two other members reported being drawn to the issue because of their personal and professional commitment to meeting the needs of all of their students.

All of the members of the Safe Schools Committee were recognized as sharing values that contributed to the success of the committee within the school system and the community. The mutual respect each committee member held for the important individual motivations and contributions of other members helped strengthen the overall ability and effectiveness of the committee. They were also described as experienced and savvy about how to work successfully to change the system. Students, educators, administrators, parents, and community members all echoed the sentiment that these five people were motivated by care for students. The data indicated that committee members were not perceived by other members of the system to be motivated by a false emphasis on "political correctness," by a desire to blame anyone, or to induce a sense of shame or guilt in either individuals or the system. And, finally, committee members shared a set of common values related to how schools change. These values included a willingness to "know what you don't know," a commitment to working collaboratively with internal and external resources, a student-centered focus, a commitment to equity and fairness, and an inclusive definition of social justice issues.

Members of the Safe Schools Committee were equally regarded as being highly competent teachers and specialists. As a veteran group of educators, they were also perceived to have already made important contributions to the school district over time. Committee members were skilled veteran educators with the credibility and savvy derived from long-term commitment to education. They had the respect and good will of their colleagues and students. As described in the next section, these attributes provided important momentum and support for the initiatives launched by the Safe Schools Committee.

Description of Selected Initiatives of the Safe Schools Committee

The overall goal of the Safe Schools Committee was to change the experiences of gay youth in this school district for the better and they wanted to do this by addressing the embedded homophobia and heterosexism of the Selectown Public School District. The members of the Safe Schools Committee reported that they believed to impact the lives of students, ultimately, there would have to be changes made in the system. While their goal may have appeared singular, the efforts of the committee were multifold.

An important way to understand the initiatives of the Safe Schools Committee is in the context of the four recommendations of the Governors Commission on Safe Schools for Gay and Lesbian Students. The four official program recommendations outlined by the Massachusetts Department of Education for the Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Youth were the first tool of analysis in this study. These four recommendations constitute the overarching goals for the statewide program and are reiterated regularly in a range of publications by the Department of Education. Therefore, a review of Select High School's efforts to meet goals that address these four areas establishes a context for understanding how their school-based efforts keep pace with the four commonly held objectives of the statewide program. Additionally, in many respects the efforts of the Selectown Public School District's Safe Schools Committee matched or exceeded the recommendations of the four recommendations of the Governor's Commission on Gay and Lesbian Youth. These four recommendations and the activities by the Selectown Public School District that extended them are described next.

The Safe Schools Committee's Response to the Recommendations of the Governor's Commission on Safe Schools for Gay and Lesbian Students

As described in chapter two, the Governor's Commission on Safe Schools for Gay and Lesbian Students made four recommendations to schools in addressing gay youth issues. These recommendations included addressing policy changes, providing support services for gay youth, initiating teacher training, and offering school-based counseling services to families of gay youth. The Safe Schools Committee of Selectown Public School District responded to each of these recommendations and, in some cases, exceeded them. Two areas where they exceeded the formal recommendations included efforts to link the initiatives of the Safe Schools Committee with other goals seen as important by the system and their efforts to establish important collaborations with school system and community-based stakeholders to support their initiatives within the system.

Policy Changes. The first recommendation of the Governor's Commission on Safe Schools for Gay and Lesbian Students was to develop policies at the school level protecting gay, lesbian, and bisexual students from harassment, violence, and discrimination. The Selectown Public School District took two approaches to policy changes. The first was to add sexual orientation to their anti-discrimination policy and the second was to install an anti-sexual harassment policy. Before efforts were launched to provide support services to gay youth, teacher training, or counseling to families, the superintendent of the district and the principal of the high school implemented a change in the district's policies. Changes in state law unequivocally mandated that school policies be changed to ensure that within school environments gay youth would be free from discrimination, harassment, or violence based on sexual orientation. In the Select

Public School District two policy changes directly addressed this mandate. The first was that such language was added to Selectown Public School District's anti-harassment policy in the student code of conduct. Additionally, the anti-sexual harassment policy was specifically worded with inclusive language so that anti-gay harassment could be addressed under the auspices of this policy too. In fact, the principal tool for enforcing policy of nondiscrimination based on sexual orientation was the anti-sexual harassment policy and complaint process.

In schools anti-gay behaviors often include teasing, taunting, and lewd comments about sexuality, sexual behavior, or sexual preference. Therefore, the anti-sexual harassment policy became a critical tool for intervention. For Selectown Public School District, their anti-sexual harassment program offered several important strengths as a policy and as a tool to stop anti-gay behaviors and change attitudes. State law has since superseded this recommendation by making it illegal to discriminate against a person in public school settings based upon sexual orientation. Across the state, teacher training workshops and school-based student support activities are the two recommendations most often addressed by local school districts.

Beginning in 1993, members of the Select High School faculty and administration had been instrumental in developing an educational curriculum, district and high school policies, and a formal complaint procedure for the high school. The committee that developed the policy and the complaint process included administrators, teachers, students, and community stakeholders. This process mirrors similar efforts described elsewhere in the study and serves to again underscore the effectiveness of the

infrastructure of the school district. By including members of each level of the organization, the final outcome was ultimately that of a better designed policy and process. As the director described in her interview, the students insisted that for their peers to really use the policy that the initial level needed to allow for a less formal, mediation-oriented intervention before referral to the principal for disciplinary action. Otherwise, they felt that students would probably never use the policy for fear it would alienate their peers even more or in other ways immediately escalate their situation. In practice, the director reported great success in this strategy. She found that being able to pull students in for a very direct discussion and a warning that any failure to immediately comply with the school's policies would result in a referral to the principal and the possibility of school suspension worked very effectively.

In an interview with the current director of the anti-sexual harassment program for the high school, it emerged that one of the first students to use the complaint process was a male student who was being harassed and threatened by other boys. Additionally, a female teacher being targeted by female students used the process to seek relief from students who were taunting her. In both cases, the person being targeted by these behaviors had never identified themselves as gay or lesbian. As in many school settings, it was sufficient to be perceived to by gay or lesbian to be subjected to the barrages of name-calling, prank telephone calls, and obscene notes and threats that both were subjected to in and out of school. In both of the anti-gay incidents the students involved were quite willing to admit their behaviors, even to the details of graphic insults and threats. In fact, they were surprised to hear that it was against school policies and even more surprised to hear it was against state law. In both incidents the students stopped

harassing the targets immediately after being warned. However, to the program director, their behaviors and subsequent responses to being confronted indicated the degree to which anti-gay prejudice is an accepted norm within the culture of the school setting and the community.

Teacher Training. The second recommendation of the Governor's Commission on Safe Schools for Gay and Lesbian Students was to offer training to school personnel in violence prevention and suicide prevention. As described elsewhere in this chapter, the Safe Schools Committee made staff training across the school district a top priority. Workshops were offered to senior administrators, high school, middle school, and elementary school educators, specialists, and service providers (e.g., bus drivers and custodians).

The Safe Schools Committee started with the senior administrator staff in a deliberate effort to solicit top down understanding of the school-based experiences of gay youth and to gather their support for these change initiatives. Next, they worked to provide the pupil personnel support staff with training workshops. Educators and specialists in this group were likely to be asked directly by gay youth to help them address school-related needs since this cohort included career counselors, school social workers, psychologists, and specialists (like the drug and alcohol education coordinator). Next, all teachers and classroom specialists within the school district were offered staff development and training opportunities too.

The Safe Schools Committee set out first, to raise the awareness level of the senior administrators within the system and to gain their support for future staff training

and development efforts. Second, they worked to provide staff development and training for all of the educators in the system (e.g., teachers, counselors, social workers, nurses, etc.). The staff training and development opportunities sponsored by the Safe Schools Committee made available workshops for staff at every level of the system; elementary, middle, and high school. While the committee launched their staff training efforts with workshops for administrators first, they were equally committed to providing training opportunities to all teachers and specialists in the district and set about systematically doing so. They included not just classroom teachers but also the pupil personnel services members (i.e., psychologists, social workers, counselors), and health, physical and Consumer and Family Studies educators. Additionally, the Special Education department, school nurses, bus drivers, and custodians were also offered similar training experiences.

These workshops were generally opportunities to bring in consultants from local universities and gay and lesbian organizations to present information and provide facilitated discussions about common concerns and questions. As much as possible, the Safe Schools Committee tried to sponsor presentations that incorporated the experiences of gay and lesbian teachers and students. For example, Kevin Jennings, from the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN) spoke as both a gay man and a high school history teacher. Another presenter combined a presentation on the implications of changes in the legal system with anecdotes from her experiences as a lesbian. Perhaps the most powerful voices were those presenters who had graduated from the Selectown Public School District and were invited back to tell about their experiences in the Selectown school system.

The first presenter brought to the Selectown Public School District system by the Safe Schools Committee, is a lesbian educator and lawyer. She conducted training for the superintendent, central administrators, and the building principals. This training was a particularly successful foundation for future efforts because it established the Safe Schools Committee effort as sanctioned by the superintendent and senior staff members. It also sent the message that the issue of gay youth in the school setting was of central concern to the bottom line of the "business" of schooling. It also educated top administrators first, which acted to bring them on board for future efforts. This training also was important because in many schools change efforts have been student-focused, such as forming Gay Straight Alliances. However, the members of the Safe Schools Committee believed that for the entire system to change top administrators must lead the way. They also believed that the behaviors of the senior administrative staff would be crucial in providing leadership and role models. Participants in this training reported its strength was in the way it combined new, useful information with the opportunity for participants to synthesize emotional aspects of the work. The workshop presenter talked about her personal experiences in public schools and the toll these experiences had on her as well as the school's legal responsibilities to gay and lesbian youth. This helped the administrators to integrate the emotional responses to this new information, as well as process it cognitively. This approach also encouraged participants to see the association of these efforts with other important values of the system (e.g., safety for students, equal access to education, and tolerance for differences).

> "I learned so much at that first in-service, from the presenters that I suddenly realized how much I didn't know and how much my behavior in the past had been inadvertently unsupportive of alternative lifestyles and people's choices." (Fran).

By beginning with administrative staff the Safe Schools Committee demonstrated for others in the organization that there was important top-down support for this work. Starting at the top with training also provided the administrative staff with an opportunity to clarify their feelings about the topic and to correlate the efforts of the Safe Schools Committee to other important goals of the district (e.g., safety, equitable access). By beginning with a session that addressed the legal responsibilities of the school to gay youth, administrators were also provided with significant external support for standing behind a politically controversial position.

Support Services for Gay Youth. The third recommendation of the Governor's Commission on Safe Schools for Gay and Lesbian Students was to offer school-based support groups for gay, lesbian, and heterosexual students. The Safe Schools Committee began to develop and implement initiatives to identify and provide resources for gay youth and to simultaneously work on efforts to raise the awareness levels and knowledge base of the senior administrators, teachers, and other adults in the school district. As these efforts got underway, the Safe Schools Committee then turned their attention to addressing these issues with all students at the high school and with students at two of the middle schools.

The Safe Schools Committee acted immediately to implement strategies to address the needs of the gay youth currently in their schools. The efforts of the Safe Schools Committee of Selectown Public School District clearly met the spirit and letter of

this recommendation. The Safe Schools Committee offered resources specifically to meet the needs of both gay youth and heterosexual youth. While the needs of these two groups for information, counseling services, and social support often overlap there are also important differences.

Initially, these strategies were directed at the needs of individuals, particularly those looking for social and psychological support services. This included offering individual counseling and support services, stepping up their referrals to community agencies and resources, and, when requested by the student, providing supportive contact with parents. They also offered support and consultation to individual teachers who were wrestling with how to respond to gay related issues in their classrooms (e.g., name-calling, teasing, bullying) or initiating innovations in their curriculum related to gay youth (e.g., class discussions that included gay issues).

At the same time as offering these counseling-oriented services, the Safe Schools Committee members were committed to getting the word out in the district that resources were available for all gay youth. These efforts were a careful balance between protecting the privacy of gay and lesbian students on campus and trying diligently to provide easily accessible social support in the form of a student organization. For example, it was the Safe Schools Committee that mentored student-led efforts to launch a Gay Straight Alliance. And it was the Safe Schools Committee that offered space in the Student Support Center after school hours for meetings and secured funding from a Department of Education grant to pay for an advisor to the Gay Straight Alliance. During this same period of time, the Safe Schools Committee secured funds to purchase resources available

to students such as library books and videotapes. Perhaps one of the committees' most creative strategies was getting the word out to students that there were sympathetic and caring adults in the school district that would be available anytime to talk to them. The committee did this by placing this message and a list of their names on the inside front cover of all library books with a gay theme.

In an effort to meet the school-based needs of gay youth, the Safe Schools Committee provided individual and group based services and support. For individuals, this included on-going crisis and social support counseling and advocating with administrators and classroom teachers for students who faced specific problems. At a group level, the Safe Schools Committee was instrumental in supporting students who founded the Gay Straight Alliance. On an annual basis, the Safe Schools Committee dedicated a proportion of their funding (from Department of Education Safe Schools Program grants) to student activities that promoted education and social support related to gay youth issues. For example, students were funded to take field trips to the Massachusetts statehouse to attend activities like Youth Rallies, to go to GLSEN-sponsored youth conferences, and on some occasions to accompany Safe Schools Committee members to teacher training workshops.

At a community level, the Safe Schools Committee developed a strong rapport with Stacey, the adult leader of the local gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender youth group. Based upon their mutual respect and care for these youth, the Safe Schools Committee members and Stacey provided an important communication loop for these youth. Their relationship, based upon mutual respect and a high degree of respect for the

privacy of their students, became a crucial communication loop in sharing information about and in providing services for gay youth and their families in the school district. Additionally, Stacey was able to act as a bridge between many of the youth that attended the community group meetings and their schools. She did this by sharing resource and referral information with students. For example, a Select High School student might be very interested in attending a community-based youth group, but not be willing at all to attend the Gay Straight Alliance at their school. Or, equally possible, a student might discuss a school-based problem in the community-based youth group and not know about the resources at school. This communication loop also provided the Safe Schools Committee with an important consultant. Stacey was in close contact with a range of students from the greater metro area and so she often was the first to know about which students were facing a crisis at school or home and what interventions might be helpful from the school. Also, Stacey was often the adult to hear how students were honestly feeling about the school climate. The relationship between Stacey and the Safe Schools Committee was an important link in the committees' ongoing efforts to develop and implement effective strategies to address the school-based experiences of gay youth in their district. She was also able to offer important anecdotal feedback to the Safe Schools Committee about how students were feeling about the school system, the school climate, and the initiatives of the committee to address the issues and concerns facing many of the gay youth. This communication loop became an integral element of the efforts of the Safe Schools Committee to make changes at the organization level because it helped to provide information about the experiences of gay youth, in the school system. This helped the Safe Schools Committee clarify and address systemic issues as they surfaced.

Counseling for Families. The fourth recommendation of the Governor's Commission on Safe Schools for Gay and Lesbian Students is the provision of school-based counseling for family members of gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth. The Safe Schools Committee did work consistently to provide an opportunity for parents and other community stakeholders to participate in and provide feedback on Safe Schools Committee initiatives and to receive individual counseling services. In practice, few parents actually took advantage of these opportunities and these services remain the most underdeveloped component of the Safe Schools Committee's efforts. There were specific examples of efforts to include parents in education activities. The most important being the parent information nights held before each of the high school and middle school assemblies. Parents were notified of the assemblies and of the parent forums via letters sent home. Also, the health education program at the high school sent letters home to the parents of incoming tenth graders every fall. This effort was to inform parents directly about the content of the comprehensive health education curriculum and to offer them the choice of another option (e.g., a physical education class) for their child.

Individual counseling and support services for parents related most often to the parents of gay youth. Members of the Safe Schools Committee were acutely aware of the need to respect the privacy of students. They were very aware that the process of questioning one's sexual orientation most often requires a span of time, opportunities for reflection, and education for both the student and the parents. In the span addressed by this study, contact with families was largely informal and initiated by parents even though committee members expressed strong willingness to be resources to families and clear support for parent involvement. For example, one mother who was particularly concerned

about the safety of her lesbian daughter called the adult advisor to the Gay Straight Alliance before the prom. The call was informal and personal rather then a complaint but it points out the availability of high school staff to parents and families of gay youth. This staff member was able to reassure the mother that the staff would take precautions to make sure her daughter was safely able to enjoy her prom. The nature of these contacts also underscored the communication loop nurtured by the members of the Safe Schools Committee, the leader of the community-based gay youth group, and concerned parents. Across the state, this fourth recommendation is the one least addressed by school districts.

Once the Safe Schools Committee had services for gay youth in the school district in place and had had the opportunity to offer preliminary training to most of the administrators and educators in the school district, they then moved to working with the parents and families of gay youth. Their design for doing this offers important insight into the way that the Safe Schools Committee was able to pull in the expertise of community stakeholders and was particularly savvy about listening to their advice and that of others within the system. This helped the committee to anticipate and, consequently, to head off many of the challenges that derailed these kinds of efforts in other school systems.

The Safe Schools Committee, in collaboration with community stakeholders, like Stacey (leader of the community youth group) and John (director of the local Massachusetts Department of Public Health Prevention Center), developed a three-day intervention strategy. This included on day one a parent information night, on day two an

all school assembly (by class), and on day three a small group discussion co-facilitated by an adult and a peer group leader.

Each time that a school assembly was to be held the Safe Schools Committee sent a letter home to students' parents notifying them of the assembly topic and offering the parent the option to withdraw their child from it. Additionally, an information session directed at parents and community members was held the night before each assembly to provide a forum to answer any questions from parents and community members. While very few parents attended any of these sessions, those who did reported that they found them very helpful and they expressed appreciation for the opportunity to hear about the program. Another interesting note is that Safe Schools Committee members reported that many of the parents that came were actually parents of gay and lesbian students. So it is important to note that these forums provided information, support, and resources to families of gay youth as well as to those of heterosexual youth. While the Safe Schools Committee anticipated that meetings might become forums for conservative views to challenge efforts to address gay issues in the school setting; in fact, they became beacons that let parents of gay youth know that they, and their children, were indeed welcome in the school.

Each assembly offered an opportunity for all of the members of each class at the high school (e.g., all ninth grade students, all tenth grade students, etc.) to hear a speaker discuss gay issues. The speakers at the assemblies changed from year to year, but always provided information to counter stereotypes and prejudices and discussed anti-gay issues

in the broader context of creating a school environment that appreciated diversity, respect for others, and tolerance.

The day after the all-class assembly, trained facilitators met students in their English classes and discussed the students' feelings and responses to what they had learned in the assembly. By working with over thirty-five adult and youth facilitators (gathered from community agencies and local peer education programs), the Safe Schools Committee was able to provide the added dimension of small group discussions to the assembly. In these discussions, students had the opportunity to ask questions, hear further information presented, and to articulate and explore their own feelings and values related to these issues. There was some concern that students would not take these discussions seriously, but in fact the results were quite inspiring to both the student leaders and the adult facilitators. For example, one community member remarked that there was very little giggling or joking, students asked useful questions seriously, and were willing to relate the principles in the information presented about gay youth (e.g., everybody wants to be respected, name calling hurts feelings) to their own experiences and needs.

In addition to conducting these assemblies at the high school, they were conducted at two middle schools as well. At the middle school level the content was shaped a little differently to be more age appropriate. For example, less time was spent on talking specifically about gay issues and more time on broader issues students at that level could relate to easily (e.g., how name-calling hurts the feelings of others). At all levels, these annual events received very high marks from students, facilitators, and teachers.

In summary, based upon the recommendations of the Governor's Commission for Safe Schools for Gay and Lesbian Youth, the Department of Education launched the statewide Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students. This program offered public school systems access to expert consultation, training, funding, and resource materials. The changes in state law and in Department of Education policies and programs offered access to significant external resources (e.g., expertise, money, resource materials, and training). Through the annual grant awards of the Department of Education Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Youth, Selectown Public School District was able to fund programs, social support activities for students, teacher training workshops, and the development of curriculum related resource materials (e.g., purchasing library books or videos). These resources helped educate, organize, and better direct the loosely tied together efforts of well-intentioned individuals within the Selectown Public School District.

Safe School Committee Efforts Beyond the Formal Recommendations

Overall, the Selectown Public School District's Safe Schools Committee addressed each of the four recommendations of the Governor's Commission on Safe Schools for Gay and Lesbian Students. Their strongest efforts were in meeting goals related to the second and third recommendations. For example, over several years the Safe Schools Committee addressed teacher training at every level of the district and provided multiple formal and informal staff development opportunities related to understanding the experiences and needs of gay youth. At the same time, the Safe Schools Committee sustained many avenues of school-based education and support for gay and heterosexual youth. These initiatives included individual and group-based activities and

involved collaboration with community-based stakeholders and service providers, as well as those within the school district organization. While it could be reasonably stated that individuals at Select High School appeared to have been moving in the direction of addressing the needs of gay youth in their school already, the added lever of these supports strengthened efforts at systemic organization change.

The commission's four recommendations were specifically designed to be general enough to allow individual schools and school districts to adapt specific objectives that would be suitable to the needs of their particular school. In some areas the Select Public School District far exceeded the scope of the four recommendations of the Governor's Commission on Safe Schools for Gay and Lesbian Youth. For example, the formal recommendations do not directly address changes to curriculum; however, individual teachers at Select High School launched a range of creative initiatives in this area.

Another example of how members of the Selectown Public School District enhanced and extended the recommendations of the Governor's Commission would be the efforts of one English teacher at Select High School. This teacher designed an eleventh grade advanced placement English class that incorporated learning about gay issues within the context of a community service learning course. Students spent the semester reading poetry, biographies and novels, viewing art, and listening to lectures related to gay issues. In the course of classroom-based discussions they were asked to reflect on such issues as their personal beliefs and attitudes about homosexuality and what they thought the experiences of gay youth in their own school might be like. The community service learning component required students to engage in a community-

based project that integrating this academic material with a participatory service. The project these students chose to do was to videotape interviews with gay and lesbian parents that either had or would have children in the school district system. The interviews were guided by questions that explored the concerns these parents had about how the school district handled gay-related issues and their concerns about what the school-based experiences of their children might be in the Selectown Public School District. Students used these videotaped interviews and related materials they had collected over the semester to prepare an educational video and workshop presentation that they then presented to the School Committee.

The Selectown Public School District's Safe Schools Committee also demonstrated exceptional efforts to collaborate with community stakeholders to meet the school-based needs of gay youth. This network included ongoing contact with and support for the community-based gay youth support group, contact with social service agencies, and at risk youth programs funded by the state Department of Public Health.

Similarly, the Safe Schools Committee developed and implemented training programs to address the needs of heterosexual youth. As described elsewhere in this chapter, these efforts included educational presentations in all-class assemblies that were coupled with classroom- based small group discussions. In addition to these presentations at the high school level, two middle school assemblies were offered as well.

Another example of these efforts are the efforts of the Safe Schools Committee to work closely with building librarians to collect and make available book and video resources useful to all students. Such efforts are beyond the expectations of the four

recommendations of the Governor's Commission on Safe Schools for Gay and Lesbian Youth.

Tables 4 to 7, which start on the following page and concludes this chapter, uses selected arrays to further illustrate the Safe Schools Committee activities by year for the years 1993 to 1997 in Selectown Public School District.

Table 4. Selected Activities of the Safe Schools Committee 1993 – 1994

Develop Policies	Teacher Training	Student Support	Counseling for Family/Youth	Other
Sexual Harassment Policy under review by superintendent and principals.	Fourth Annual GLSTN Conference (April). Equity for Gay and Lesbian Students. Leslie College Conference (May). Summer Workshop to Plan Next Academic Year (July). Form a district wide staff group, Common Ground, committed to human rights and equity.		Individual counseling services offered to students. Some parent support offered on individual basis. Individual counseling services offered to students. Some parent support offered on individual basis. Began to identify resources for gay and lesbian students and their families.	Established Safe Schools Committee (SSC). Established Safe Schools Committee (SSC). SSC met twice a month. Developed relationship with adult advisor of community based gay youth support group.

Table 5. Selected Activities of the Safe Schools Committee 1994 – 1995

Develop Policies	Teacher Training	Student Support	Counseling for Family/Youth	Other
Policy on Sexual Harassment revised to include sexual orientation.	In-Service workshop for Superintendents Administrative Group (October). In-Service for Pupil Personnel Services members (January). "Working with Gay and Lesbian Teens." Suffolk University (February). Elementary teaching staff In-Service (March). In-Service for Middle and High School staff (March). In-Service for Special Education Department (March).	Student group, Students for Social Impact, becomes Gay Straight Alliance and meets regularly. Student Assembly with follow-up discussions in English classes held for ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth graders. Library books bought for gay youth issues. Safe Schools Committee members post their names on inserts in books in library as contact people for students with questions.	Information Session for Parents and Community Members (May). Individual counseling services offered to students. Some parent support offered on individual basis.	Member of Safe Schools Committee takes a Harvard extension course, "Gay and Lesbian Issues in Education." Funding provided for advisor to a Gay Straight Alliance. Contact with community based gay youth support group. Contact with related social services that also respond to gay youth needs.

Table 6. Selected Activities of the Safe Schools Committee 1995 – 1996

Develop Policies	Teacher Training	Student Support	Counseling for Family/Youth	Other
Policy on Sexual Harassment Implementation Guidelines developed and distributed in district.	In-Service workshop for Superintendents Administrative Group (October). In-Service for Pupil Personnel Services members (January). "Working with Gay and Lesbian Teens." Suffolk University (February). Elementary teaching staff In-Service (March). In-Service for Middle and High School staff (March). In-Service for Special Education Department (March).	Student group, Students for Social Impact, becomes Gay Straight Alliance and meets regularly. Student Assembly with follow-up discussions in English classes held for ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth graders. Library books bought for gay youth issues. Safe Schools Committee members post their names on inserts in books in library as contact people for students with questions.	Information Session for Parents and Community Members (May). Individual counseling services offered to students. Some parent support offered on individual basis.	Member of Safe Schools Committee takes a Harvard extension course, "Gay and Lesbian Issues in Education." Funding provided for advisor to a Gay Straight Alliance. Contact with community based gay youth support group. Contact with related social services that also respond to gay youth needs.

Table 7. Selected Activities of the Safe Schools Committee 1996 – 1997

Develop Policies	Teacher Training	Student Support	Counseling for Family/Youth	Other
	Awareness training offered to Prom Chaperones. Summer workshop for district educators designed to include gay issues in the curriculum in age/grade appropriate manner. Summer workshop to begin work on learning outcome goals.	Gay Straight Alliance meeting regularly. Gay and lesbian students attend high school prom with same-sex dates. Eleventh grade AP English Class uses homosexuality as theme for course and becomes focus of community service learning project.	Individual counseling services offered to students. Some parent support offered on individual basis.	Funding provided for advisor to a Gay Straight Alliance. Contact with related social services that also respond to gay youth needs. Safe Schools Committee members meet with director of curriculum and staff development to plan next steps for change initiatives. Funding received for all volunteers for summer diversity workshop and for outside facilitator.

CHAPTER 5

GENERAL FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

In chapter five I present and discuss the results and analysis of the research from the perspective of participants' perceptions of changes related to initiatives of the Selectown Public School District's Safe Schools Committee. The data indicated change focused in three areas: in individuals, the school system, and the school climate. In the first section I present these and an exemplar related to changes at each level. In the second section I discuss the contributions of the Safe Schools Committee as a subsystem for systemic organization changes in the District and High School and describe four "next steps" for the Committee. In the third section of this chapter, I offer a reassessment of the multicultural organization awareness and the use of organization-wide strategies to address the school-based needs of gay youth in Selectown Public School District and Select High School. And in the fourth, and final, section the seven key findings indicated by the analysis of the data are given.

Perceived Individual, School System, and School Climate Changes

As described in chapter three, interviews and participant observations were gathered from students, educators, administrators, community stakeholders, Massachusetts Department of Education consultants and parents. Before being interviewed, participants were asked to respond to a brief written questionnaire designed to collect information for profiles such as number of years in the school setting, job title, and role related to the Safe Schools Committee. In the interview process participants were asked questions from a semi-structured interview protocol. Interviews with individuals

lasted generally one hour and a half while focus group interviews generally lasted forty-five minutes to one hour. The five areas of assessment for multicultural organization development offered by Jackson and Hardiman (1994) provided the thematic focus for the interviews. Questions addressed the five components:

1. mission, goals and values
2. personnel profile
3. technology
4. management practices
5. awareness and climate.

Four research questions guided the interviews, document review, and participant observations gathered at each stage of the study. Participants were asked if they perceived any changes in their themselves, in their school system, or in their school climate based on participation in the Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Youth. Indeed, participants in the study at every level of the organization reported that they perceived changes in themselves, the school system, and the school climate. The overall goal of the Safe Schools Committee, to facilitate a change in the daily experiences of gay youth in their school setting, was being met at the time of this study.

Individual Changes

Participants perceived the most profound changes related to the Safe Schools Program to be in experiences they had of personal change and the changes that they noticed in each other. Changes reported by participants spanned four interrelated

domains: new knowledge, new beliefs, new behaviors, and a spiritual sense of doing "good" work.

Members of the Safe Schools Committee, educators, administrators, students, and some community stakeholders reported that it was important to learn a substantial amount of new information about homosexuality and the gay community. Knowledge for most participants at every level of the organization about gays at the beginning of the work of the Safe Schools Committee was vague and biased. Often, it was based on anecdotal stories, social stereotypes, and messages gathered informally from society, families, and religious institutions. Changes such as increased knowledge, new ways of responding to gays, and an increased understanding of models and strategies useful in addressing gay youth related issues in schools were described. As would be expected, most adults and students reported a significant increase in their overall knowledge about gay related issues in general, and about models and effective strategies for addressing school-based needs of gay youth specifically. Of course, what information participants reported as "new" for them was depended on who they were as individuals.

For some members of the Safe Schools Committee, the Selectown Public School District system, and members of the community participating in these change initiatives the basic information offered in training workshops was very important. These were people who described themselves as holding "good intentions" but without the knowledge or experiences to know how to help. For example, it proved extremely helpful for some participants to learn about gay identity development, to explore roots of anti-gay prejudice in the United States, and to clarify personal values. One Massachusetts

Department of Education consultant (who conducted workshops for administrators and educators) joked that a goal early on in workshops was to simply get participants more physically comfortable with saying the words "gay and lesbian."

By the same token, some members of the school system had a great deal of expertise around gay youth issues through personal experiences, relationships with gay members in their family, friendship networks, and professional training. For example, the two members of the Safe Schools Committee that identified as lesbians had a great deal of experience and expertise. However, until this the initiatives of the Safe Schools Committee they had had very few opportunities to apply these skills in school. Therefore they had not been able to share their expertise and experience with students, educators, administrators, or parents in the school district until the Safe Schools Committee provided both the invitation and the forum to do so.

The changes in participants' beliefs, and feelings, about homosexuality appeared to play an important role in personal growth. Indicators of changed beliefs and feelings appeared in interviews as increased comfort with talking openly about gay issues, an expanding notion of what being gay might mean. This also included being more knowledgeable about and accepting of gay-related issues, being more likely to incorporate gay related issues into their classes, and being more comfortable with inclusive methods in the classroom and strategies in the school system.

In looking at changes in individual's beliefs and feelings about homosexuality, age cohort was somewhat a factor (Herdt & Boxer, 1993). For many senior educators and administrators, gay issues were not a part of their education or professional training

experiences. In fact, many adults interviewed reported that they were taught growing up that being gay was just not talked about and certainly not in school settings. Some members of the Safe Schools Committee reported that they perceived young, newly hired teachers as distinctly more open and less judgmental about gay related issues than their more veteran colleagues. However, youth did not assure tolerance or respect for differences. Students reported that they found the efforts related to the Safe Schools Committee helpful in a variety of ways in changing their beliefs, too. For gay and heterosexual students, the quality of their new knowledge also reflected the basis they started from. Heterosexual youth reported increased empathy and tolerance for social differences with access to this new information. Gay students reported a better understanding of how their personal experience resembled the experiences of other gay people, new information about the broader gay community, and an increased sense of self esteem and social comfort gained from meeting other students like themselves. For example, one student reported that attending the youth conferences exposed him to information (historical and contemporary) about the lesbian and gay community that he felt he would otherwise not have found. This student also said that this workshop inspired him to want to learn more about gay history in the United States.

In addition to changes in knowledge and beliefs, participants reported behavioral changes as well. Again, how participants changed how they acted in the school setting depended upon the stage of awareness at which they were starting the process. For some participants, it was a major break-through to personally stop using anti-gay language or jokes. Others reported working hard at refining subtle skills such as counseling intake questions. Another example of this range is the in the different ways educators were

addressing gay related issues in their teaching. For some teachers, allowing gay issues to be addressed in class discussions was a stretch. On the other end, one teacher dedicated the entire year of an advanced placement English class to a gay theme.

The fourth domain of change indicated by an analysis of the data was an increased sense of being good, principled people for doing this work. I refer to this as spirituality because many participants reported broad personal benefits such as an increased sense of personal integrity, self-esteem, and empowerment. For some, the change initiatives of the Safe Schools Program made them feel good about themselves. They reported that these efforts felt like "important work" that "really makes a difference" for students. For others, their happiness at being involved in morally "good" work helped them feel an increased sense of well being, renewed their interest in the school, and reminded them of their love for teaching. Many of the participants in the study shared stories of being challenged by friends, colleagues, and family members for being supportive of the Safe Schools Committee initiatives. Participants were reflective about the nature of their work to address the needs of gay youth increased their own senses of self-esteem and integrity.

Participants reported a variety of experiences at the individual level that indicated changes related to their participation in the efforts of the Safe Schools Committee. New knowledge, beliefs, behaviors, and a sense of goodness were indicated across all levels of the organization. For most participants, changes were not sequential ones but synergistic combinations of new knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors. The story of how "Tom," the principal of Select High School, changed by being involved with the Safe Schools

Committee change initiatives offers a rich example of the nature of change at the individual level.

Tom. "Tom," the principal, has been at Select High School for more than two decades and an educator even longer. He is a native of Selectown and is representative of the traditionally strong community of working middle class, white, Irish Catholics in town. In his own description, Tom notes that when the Safe Schools Committee began, he was not comfortable supporting issues related to lesbians and gays.

> "I was as homophobic as anybody. Just as concerned that gay and lesbian lifestyles were awful things, and that we should make sure that we never allow anybody to talk about that in school." (Tom).

Members of the committee described him at the outset as appearing unable to even say the words gay and lesbian and of not being able to "get out of the room fast enough" when gay related issues were even mentioned. Not surprisingly, it was hard for him, at that time, to accept that the high school had any problems with anti-gay behaviors or climate.

The members of the Safe Schools Committee did, however, respect Tom personally. And, they were aware of the important role the principal played in the school setting as a leader and as a role model. While committee members were skeptical of ever getting his support, they were not dissuaded from their goals. Based on the principal's lukewarm approval, they pushed ahead in setting up the committee, launching staff development activities, and in providing school-based resources to gay youth. During this time the committee took care to keep him regularly informed of their activities and did not try to press him prematurely for any kind of overt commitment or support.

Over the duration of the work of the Safe Schools Committee, the principal's stance on gay youth-related issues shifted completely. From his earlier reticence he moved to being a strong, articulate supporter of the committee and its change initiatives. When asked how or why this change came over Tom, committee members laughed and said they had no idea. Tom himself credits the empathy and support of Safe Schools Committee members and hearing directly from gay students about their experiences. (For example, Lisa's story reported in chapter four). As Tom said,

> "I began seeing my kids — the high school kids — concerns and difficulties with their own ability to function where they needed to function. I began recognizing within myself, you know, I can't leave them this way." (Tom).

The changes have been so complete that he now makes presentations statewide to other school administrators about the Safe Schools Committee and their efforts to address the school-based needs of gay youth in this school district. In his interview, Tom acknowledged that he had had to let go of many things he had learned at his "mothers knee," as well as personal feelings and religious teachings. His change was supported by a combination of the staff training sessions; a superintendent and staff that respected and supported people growing, learning, and taking risks; and, the opportunity over time provided by the Safe Schools Committee to balance new knowledge with a reevaluation of his feelings about the issues.

> "I feel like a much better person, honest to God! Yeah. I've grown a great deal. It's a rare opportunity to kind of be authentically expressing your values. It's a — that's the silver lining with all of this." (Tom).

Tom saw this work first and foremost as benefiting students in the school. The unexpected reward was feeling spiritually better himself for supporting the initiatives of

the Safe Schools Program. Another benefit of these changes was that others in the school were aware of the Tom's changes, as well. Students, educators, administrators, community members, and consultants all noted the changes. As such, he provided an important role model of change, risk-taking, and of leadership within the school system that supported the involvement of others. As Carol, the director of the sexual harassment program noted, Tom made his mind up based on principles and then waded into the issues, whether he was completely comfortable or not because he believed it was the right thing to do. This modeling of change and leadership extended to changes in the school system as well. In the next section I describe the indicators of change in the school system.

School System Changes

The efforts of the Safe Schools Committee of the Selectown Public School District did result in systemic organization changes in this school system related to meeting the school-based needs of gay youth. Indicators of school system changes were evidence of the extension of the individual changes in the knowledge, beliefs and behaviors described above to how the school system operated. Organization change indicators included such dimensions as innovations to policies and management practices, rewards and punishments offered in the school system, staff development and teacher training opportunities, curriculum, and support services offered for gay youth. Additionally, data indicated that changes in the values and behaviors of leaders in the school system, such as the changes in Tom described above, were crucial to efforts to institutionalize new expectations and practices.

Changes in policies were an important component of systemic change because they heralded new norms and expectations of the school system. Senior administrators were aware that changing behaviors was different than changing beliefs. They respected personal differences with the policy, but conveyed to school system members that the changes were serious and that they expected compliance in the school setting. Resistance to change will be discussed further later in this chapter, but it should be noted here that this was one of the reasons resistance to change was nominal. Senior administrators actively supported other activities of the Safe Schools Committee, for example by taking responsibility for introducing staff development sessions, and providing access to required in-service days for such training.

Top down support of the systemic change initiatives such as those of the Safe Schools Committee was important. The sexual harassment policy described in chapter four offers a good example of the role of leadership in systemic change efforts. Once senior administrators saw and understood the need to address school-based gay youth issues they worked diligently to change formal policies, structure support services, and to offer required staff training and development on these issues as well. The district superintendent and the high school principal worked supported the work of educators, students, community members, and administrators to create support for and intervention strategies that addressed gay youth related issues. However, behaviors that had the most important consequences were often the casual ones.

Committee members actively nurtured good communication with senior administrators by dropping by the administrative offices informally to fill key people in

on the status of the committee's projects. Individual members of the Safe Schools Committee also developed enough trust with some administrators that they shared their personal lives (e.g., both lesbian committee members came "out" to the superintendent) in ways they would never have done before. These efforts were important contributions to the success of the committee's efforts because they continued to provide administrators a human context for these efforts, nurtured good communication networks across the organization, and reiterated daily the values underpinning these change efforts. Additionally, the skill of Safe Schools Committee members in communication also supported people in talking across school buildings, across disciplinary specialties, and across school system hierarchies in patterns different from the usually constricted "up and down" manner.

Staff and students perceived the nuances of day-to-day communication as important signals and more genuinely indicative of the values and beliefs of leaders. For example, behaviors as simple as passing on information or supporting conference attendance by signing off on substitute teachers for the day were signs to staff and students that their work was valued. In the middle of the Safe Schools Committee's work the district superintendent retired. Members of the Safe Schools Committee were afraid that his departure would be the end of support from senior administrators and, consequently, the end to their ability to effect systemic changes. They scheduled a meeting with the newly appointed superintendent as soon as he was on board. They gave him copies of their Massachusetts Department of Education Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students mini-grants, related the initiatives they had already accomplished, and described their goals for the current academic year.

An example of how important informal communications can be happened one afternoon in the high school's Student Support Center. Two members of the Safe Schools Committee were in their offices and overheard the new superintendent in the outer room talking with a new school committee member. In this conversation, they heard the superintendent accurately and positively describe the goals and some of the activities of the committee. He went on to say that they were the first group of educators he met with when he came in to office and how much he, and the school system, supported their work. They reported the tone of the conversation as very "business as usual" and that both the superintendent and the school committee member seemed unaware that they could be heard. This was a watershed event because hearing it signaled to committee members that the new superintendent was genuinely supportive of their efforts in a manner that formal declarations could never do.

Another good indication that change efforts have begun to be institutionalized in this school setting is that educators began to change the content and process of teaching students. Data indicated that teachers were introducing gay themes when appropriate in class discussions, confronting anti-gay language and behaviors in the classroom and, in some cases, incorporating gay themes as the core curriculum in the courses they taught. The efforts of two male heterosexual physical education teachers to incorporate gay issues into their health courses provides an example of the extent of integration of values, rewards, and expectations that come with institutionalizing these change efforts.

Two health education teachers at Select High School distributed a "Heterosexual Questionnaire" and a list identifying historical figures as gay to their tenth grade health

education classes. The questionnaire reversed questions typically asked of lesbian, gay, and bisexual people to highlight the stereotypes embedded in them. For example, the questionnaire asked about when they had discovered their heterosexuality and when they first disclosed their heterosexuality to another person. The list of historical figures included three Catholic popes and two cardinals as well as other important historical figures. Both teachers reported to the superintendent that these classes were the "best we ever taught." They perceived the classes to be big successes because students were actively involved, asked questions, and genuinely seemed to learn the intended lessons about tolerance and respect.

Outside of the school system, however, public furor arose when the local newspaper carried an article about the lessons. The list of historical figures in particular drew the ire of Catholics who decried it as "Catholic-bashing" and indoctrination. The teachers intended for the list to spark discussion, encourage value clarification, and to sensitize students to stereotypes of gays and lesbians. The irony of this story, as pointed out by the superintendent, is that the two health teachers were white, middle-aged, heterosexual men and devoutly Catholic as are the principal, the director of physical and health education and the superintendent.

In the case of the health teachers, both the superintendent and the director of physical and health education protected the names of the two teachers (there are eight in total), even within the school system, to make sure they were not subjected to personal attacks. These behaviors signaled support for risk-taking and exercising leadership (e.g., willing to support people under them to take on making important contributions, even if

that increased risk of failure like with the questionnaire). The superintendent handled this case in the same manner as he did when the director of physical and health education was "getting his head handed to him" during the fight to install comprehensive health curriculum.

> "I always supported him publicly, always stayed between him and the crowd as much as I could. I've always done that with all our people. We may have had our discussions behind the scenes, but I think it's not something that you can set out as a goal." (Alex).

This incident also reiterated the nature of serendipity in creating systemic changes. For example, from a traditional perspective the physical and health education teachers might have been the last teachers expected to take up the challenges of these initiatives but in fact they ended up in the vanguard. Additionally, although this effort was deemed to be a successful teaching and learning event by the teachers (based on student response and participation) outside the system it caused a great deal of commotion. A part of the public discussion of this incident was certainly stressful (e.g., the series of religiously conservative guest editorials in the local newspaper). However, another unexpected positive outcome of the publicity around this incident was that it also served to demonstrate to stakeholders outside of the school system that the administrators were genuinely committed to school change efforts related to gay youth issues.

Numerous examples emerged in the data indicating that the Selectown School District and Select High School were beginning to institutionalize changes in the school system related to gay youth issues. Concrete examples were present of changes in policies, management practices, reward structures, and innovations in curriculum. In the

next section, the synergy of these individual and school system changes is explored in the context of school climate.

School Climate Changes

An expressed goal of the Safe Schools Committee and those participating in the change efforts was to provide increased support for gay youth in the district by institutionalizing changes in the school system. It is important to note that participants did report an overall increase in the number of times and in the contexts in which they talked about, or heard discussed, gay youth related issues. This indicated a basic, pervasive increase in the overall willingness of the school system to focus on gay youth issues. Certainly, gay youth took notice of this increased attention to their needs and the additional support services that were made available to them. Overall, participants at every level of the organization reported an overall positive increase in the nature of the school climate related to gay issues. Indicators of change included concrete aspects as well as perceptions based on intuition and feelings. However, educators, students, and administrators were quick to point out that there is still much that can and should be done to meet the school-based needs of gay youth in the district.

Concrete indicators of changes in the school climate included improved responses from administrators and teachers to anti-gay language and behaviors in classrooms and in public spaces. Also, many educators reported new knowledge of and use of strategies in their professional roles designed to better support gay youth (e.g., redesigning the counseling centers intake questions). All participants in the study knew by name a range of adults in the school district that were perceived to be knowledgeable and empathetic

about school-based issues for gay youth. They all knew about the goals of the Safe Schools Committee, changes in policies, and specific incidents when the top administration had taken actions to support these goals and policies. At the student level, the Gay Straight Alliance operated continuously through transitions in faculty sponsorship and student leadership. Students were keenly aware of the communication loops and efforts at collaboration between community members, educators, parents and administrators about gay youth issues in the school district and felt positive about them.

Feelings related to perceived changes included an increased sense, on the part of students especially, that people were more sensitive and aware of gay-related issues and more likely to intervene on behalf of gay youth. Administrators and educators reported seeing better the linkage between anti-gay harassment and violence and the need for interventions related to the larger context of intolerance and disrespect exhibited in the school setting. The coordinator of the community-based gay youth support group reported that, since the change efforts of the Safe Schools Committee, she had stopped hearing "horror" stories from students in the Selectown Public School District although stories from other school systems abounded. She attributed this change directly to efforts by the Safe Schools Committee to raise awareness levels in the school setting.

A key indicator of school climate is the degree to which students and adults in the system feel secure about identifying as gay to other members of the school setting. There were many examples of students and adults "coming out" to other individuals in the school system based on friendship and mutual trust. This included students confiding in educators and administrators as well as educators confiding in students, other educators,

and administrators. For example, one teacher who identified as lesbian came out to her history classes during a class discussion of how current gay issues related historically to other civil rights movements. However, generally "coming out" is still considered extremely risky. In the case of this teacher, she discussed it with supportive peers, her building principal, and the superintendent before telling her class. This teacher went to extraordinary lengths to anticipate and positively manage the stress that her revelation might have on the heterosexual students and adults in the school system.

Another example of the unpredictable nature of change efforts was how the act of one person "coming out" created residual stress on other gays and lesbians in the system. Gays and lesbians in this school district had to balance complex dimensions of personal change in addition to those factors related to changes in other individuals and the school system. The experiences of the lesbians on the Safe Schools Committee are an example. When they identified themselves publicly with the initiatives of the Safe Schools Committee, and began to be more "out" with selected other adults in the system, other gay and lesbian educators and administrators in the school district who were not "out" distanced themselves quickly. The fear of the repercussions for being identified as gay in this school district was still strong enough that closeted educators and administrators would distance themselves from being associated with "out" teachers. For example, the lesbian committee members tried to encourage other members of a community-based social support group for lesbian and gay teachers to provide greater support to the efforts of the Safe Schools Committee. Members of this group, which had been meeting for years, not only didn't offer support for these efforts, they disbanded rather then be associated with people involved with the Safe Schools Committee.

Understanding the changes in the school climate is complex but certainly indicates that before members of the school district take the risk of identifying publicly as lesbian and gay they require evidence of substantial commitment, over time, from the school system. The stakes remain high for students and teachers alike to identify publicly and they look for multiple signs that the system has institutionalized changes. Two stories provide exemplars of changes in the school climate. The first is the story about the lockers incident and the second is about the senior prom.

Participants at every level of the organization in the study cited the incident of the lockers as a turning point in their perceptions of the school climate related to gay youth issues. This incident was so central because there was such a remarkable difference in how the administrators and educators involved assessed this situation, intervened, and then responded to the students involved. The school social worker, Anne, related the story about how a young man had come down to her office concerned about a female friend. The student knew that her boyfriend was physically abusing her and that she was too intimidated to do anything about it. He came to the social worker seeking advice about whether he should intervene, and if so, how to do so effectively. In discussion with the social worker, he determined that he knew his friend and her parents well enough to trust that her parents would want to know about the abuse and would help her. So, he contacted her parents and told them. The boyfriend was furious at this and decided to take revenge on him. He did this by doctoring photos taken of the student at a party into lewd, homosexual poses and then plastering posters of these snapshots on every senior locker in the high school. The poster went up during a period when classes were in session and the administrators responded immediately. They descended en masse on the corridor, opened

every locker, and removed all of the posters before students were out of classes. The social worker related that she had never before seen all of the building administrators intervene in any situation together, move so completely in sync, or respond so quickly. The responsible students were quickly identified, referred to the student discipline process, and required to go to counseling. This is a remarkable shift from how these same administrators responded to Lisa's experiences as described in chapter four.

The chaperone training before the 1997 senior prom provides another, less reactive, exemplar of how the Safe Schools Committee effectively identified and institutionalized changes in the school system related to gay youth issues. Early in the spring of 1997 a group of gay and lesbian students decided to go to the senior prom with same-sex dates. Soon after that they started hearing rumors about intended violence against them were they to show up with same-sex dates. Information about these fears surfaced first in the community-based youth group. Stacey called members of the committee and related the students' fears to them. The members of the Safe Schools Committee helped the chaperones to better understand what their gay students might be feeling and experiencing. And, the committee worked with the advisor of the Gay Straight Alliance, several students, and the teachers and administrators who were designated as chaperones for the prom to create appropriate intervention strategies for the evening should they be necessary. The evening was reportedly a success by everyone's account. There were no confrontations or anti-gay incidents and the gay and lesbian students were able to relax enough to enjoy themselves.

These stories illustrate how an intervention that began at one level (e.g., the annual chaperone-training workshop with a discussion devoted to raising the awareness of the chaperones) became a systemic intervention affecting the school climate for gay and heterosexual youth as well. Most importantly, these concerns were addressed in a manner that developed a positive rapport between the gay youth (via their Gay Straight Alliance advisor and Stacey) and the adults in the school system. It demonstrated that the adults in the school system were as responsible for and committed to making sure that the gay and heterosexual students experience a healthy and supportive school environment. In the next section I analyze the contributions of the Safe Schools Committee as a subsystem for systemic change.

Conflict and Resistance in Organization Change

Many efforts to address gay youth related issues in school systems are hampered by the prospect, or reality, of serious conflicts over this topic between members of a school system, parents, and community members. Conflict is inherent in any organization change effort and the experiences of the Selectown Public School District and Select High School were no exception to this dynamic. In the next section I describe the nature of the conflicts and resistance to organization change that emerged in the District and High School related to the efforts of the Safe Schools Committee and I provide examples of how they effectively responded to and incorporated this aspect of change.

Conflicts emerge when belief systems, norms, and expectations are challenged by the goals of change initiatives (Schmuck & Runkel, 1994). In working to change the embedded values and norms related to controversial issues, like the topic of gay youth,

issues within a school system, and between subsystems within a school system, conflict is unavoidable. Conflict can manifest in terms of conflicts between individuals, within a subsystem, and between subsystems within an organization. The Safe Schools Committee certainly faced challenges in each of these areas and demonstrated skill in responding effectively to conflict and resistance to their change initiatives from individuals and the system.

Individually-based conflicts related to the change initiatives of the Safe Schools Committee were reported fairly rarely in the study. This could reflect the perception, reported across the entire school setting, that top administrators fully endorsed the work of the committee. Therefore, individual members of the school district were probably unlikely to be too overtly expressive of dissatisfaction with their work. However, on occasion conflicts did arise. Sometimes these conflicts were directed at members of the Safe Schools Committee personally. For example, a member of the Safe Schools Committee reported being confronted after a required staff training session by a long-term friend who was also a teacher in the system. She described her friend as absolutely furious at her personally that her time had been "wasted." The committee member pointed out that teachers' time is so pressed that mandatory attendance at anything, much less on a program related to gay youth issues, was perceived of as a heavy burden. This teacher was particularly mad at the committee member for having been part of the program and saw the committee member's involvement in promoting a mandatory training on a topic, gay youth, she was not interested in as a kind of personal betrayal. Overtime, they were able to resolve this conflict.

Later, the committee member who experienced this conflict reported that after about a week the teacher did apologize to her for being so mad and said that, upon reflection, she had really learned a lot of important new information. This story underscores that because even many veteran teachers feel so pressed for time and resources these days that any additional expectations, regardless of merit, meet resistance. This initiative also relied on outside resources, offered the added benefit of putting very little additional stress on the school system directly. They tapped lots of outside helpers to mount their big assemblies.

Conflict occurs as a natural part of the growth of groups. Learning how to recognize it and respond effectively can greatly strengthen the group's life and productivity. By translating the work of the Safe Schools Committee into fairly specific roles, according to individual preferences and strengths, committee members were able to constructively incorporate the inevitable conflicts that arise between individuals in work groups. Each of the committee members made particular efforts to point out their respect for the other group members even if they disagreed with each other or became frustrated with progress on projects. Again the facilitation skills of the consultant from the Department of Education Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students provided invaluable service in helping the group to uncover and talk through disputes openly.

An additional example at an organization level of how resistance and conflict arose within the Selectown Public School District is the presence of individuals within the school system that believes strongly that homosexuality and gay related issues have no place in public school settings. (Recall that even "Tom," the high school principal,

state that this was his position prior to the efforts of the Safe Schools Committee). A case in point is that of two individuals who contributed a steady stream of anti-gay letters to the editor of the local newspaper. One person is an educator within the district and the other is a parent. Both of them write fairly scathing anti-gay letters to the local paper on a regular basis. They each represent the religious conservative position that homosexuality is immoral and therefore should be completely excluded from the school setting. One of the Safe Schools Committee members has regularly responded to these letters to the editor. Her responses to the anti-gay sentiments of the letters have been designed to provide accurate information and expressions of support for the work of the school district to address the needs of gay youth and to balance the public dialogues.

At the individual level, persons strongly opposed to Safe Schools Committee initiatives were excused from participation, but not allowed to sabotage the program goals. For example, the organizational response within the school district to the educator described above has been a type of benign neglect. When training workshops for teachers were offered in her building, the superintendent agreed to excuse her from them. The director of curriculum and staff development points out that this respect for individual beliefs is tempered by the expectation that the overall goals of the school district be supported. In speaking about how the school district responds to individuals who disagree with the Safe Schools Committee initiatives, she explained that,

> "...the superintendent has given people freedom not to participate. He hasn't given them freedom to undermine or sabotage the efforts, but on an individual basis, he has made it clear that if this is something you truly are uncomfortable dealing with, we'll find another was to get it to students. So the behavior has been acknowledged which I think is important. But not supported." (Fran).

In the case of community members, such as parents, the Selectown Public School District had the opportunity to develop effective strategies for incorporating conflict and dissension in healthy ways within the system through important prior experiences. As noted in earlier sections of this chapter, these strategies included forums for individuals to express their views and provide feedback on change initiatives as well as group settings that encouraged dialogue and compromise.

Another community-based example is the extent to which the inclusion of parent input was cultivated (e.g., letters to parents explaining program goals and parent information nights). At an organization level, the prior efforts that led to a comprehensive health curriculum provided new knowledge about homosexuality that wasn't available before. Those efforts also galvanized the school district to incorporate the use of strategies like community advisory committees in planning changes. These strategies kept parents regularly informed and offered a forum within which to answer questions and acknowledge dissension over controversial topics without backing away from them.

Future Contributions of the Safe Schools Committee as a Subsystem for Change

Despite the best efforts of the Safe Schools Committee, and the good intentions of many administrators and educators, gay students in the school system do remain at risk of social and emotional isolation, harassment, and violence. While no school setting is yet truly safe for gay and lesbian students and adults, there is evidence that the efforts of the Safe Schools Committee are making progress to institutionalize system-wide changes in the District and High School to make this system safer and more supportive. As described

by the director of curriculum and staff development for the district, the change efforts of the Safe Schools Committee have become rooted in the system.

> "I think one of the reasons it's gonna sustain itself is because now it's getting into the artifacts of the system. It's not just somebody's idea and it's not just on an oral/verbal kind of a-story." (Fran).

As highlighted in chapter four, systemic change requires the dedicated efforts of a skilled subsystem for change over time. In the next section of this chapter, I address the four "next steps" of the Safe Schools Committee as a subsystem for change in the Selectown Public School District and Select High School. The data indicated four areas of focus for future efforts of the Safe Schools Committee. These were the development of leadership, strategic planning, curriculum and evaluation, and linking with other important goals of the school system.

The five members of the Safe Schools Committee provided skilled and savvy leadership for the past four years. The work of the Committee has been recognized internally and externally as student-focused, productive, well respected, and a model for other schools. Originally, none of the members anticipated the work of the committee would last more than a year or two. They reported that they continue to be surprised at how much more there is to be done on these issues and that they are all still so directly involved in the work of the Safe Schools Committee.

Current members recognize that the substance of the work of the committee has evolved and that the leadership must evolve as well. For example, there is common agreement and interest in getting a regularized plan in place so that much of the work that needs to be done over and over becomes easier to accomplish. That kind of long-term

planning is not of central interest to many of the current committee members. This is one example of a goal that would be more easily accomplished if new committee members, committed to a long-term involvement with the change initiatives, took over those tasks.

When the initiatives of the Safe Schools Committee first started, the required skills of the subsystem included excellent communication processes, counseling and crisis intervention, community-based networking, and staff training and development. The work of the Safe Schools Committee has since shifted from a focus on supporting individual teachers and students to management of what has virtually become an internal continuing education program. The current scope of the work of the committee has shifted to the development of curriculum resources, materials, and learning outcomes, which are not the forte of most of the current committee members and the leadership will need to evolve as well. Another component of this shift in leadership is the need for a more formal kind of planning process.

As the scope and activities of the Safe Schools Committee have expanded over the years the informal conviviality of the committee began to work against itself. For example, as the committee staged workshops for hundreds of students at a time, there was increased pressure to plan well in advance of asking community members to contribute their time and talent. Also, the expectations in the system have been raised to the point where the committee is expected regularly to reproduce in-service workshops and training sessions for new teachers and students, as well as to continue working with the teachers and students in place in the system. The importance of this kind of strategic planning was underscored by community members who truly valued their efforts and wanted to

contribute to the Safe Schools Committee's programs but were frustrated by the "seat of the pants" planning. Another important component of this strategic planning would be efforts to locate funding for the initiatives of the Safe Schools Program within the school district's budget. Currently, the Massachusetts Department of Education Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students underwrites funding for the Safe Schools Committee. This would also create another demonstration of the commitment of the school system to institutionalizing these change efforts.

In addition to funding, the most significant commitment a school system can make to gay youth issues is to make them a part of the "bottom line" efforts of schools, that is the curriculum. The Selectown Public School District and Select High School do already demonstrate evidence of individual teacher effort to develop, implement, and evaluate curriculum initiatives related to gay youth issues. One example, described in chapter three, is the yearlong curriculum developed for the Junior Advanced Placement English course.

Naturally, the precursor to curriculum development is the need to define learning outcome goals upon which to base the curriculum. This underscores the need for the Safe Schools Committee to have broader membership so that a representative range of departments and school levels is involved in the development process.

> "The biggest one we're facing right now is how to define student outcomes. What is it that we want our students to know and be able to do in this area? I mean, it's one thing to provide a safe, supportive environment which is the affective piece, but we've now moved into the academic piece and if it's going to become part of what we teach, how do we define what it is that we want to teach?" (Fran).

Evaluation is the matching bookend to curriculum. Once learning outcomes are established and implemented how will learning be assessed? Suggestions of how to evaluate these developmental goals have included noting if students do display increased desirable emotions (e.g., ability to empathize) or problem-solving skills (e.g., use of good questions). Also, looking for evidence that students are able to take in the new information on gay-related issues, synthesize it, and apply it in useful ways to their own life experiences and needs. Developmental education is complex because of working simultaneously with dynamics of human development, life stage changes, levels of self-awareness, world view, moral development, and cognitive development and hence difficult to evaluate.

Members of the Safe Schools Committee are aware of the need to make these transitions in leadership, planning, and curriculum and evaluation. In fact, they have been at the vanguard of seeking new leadership for these future core efforts. For example, one goal of the 1997 five-day summer teacher in-service workshop was to begin to establish age and grade appropriate learning outcomes related to diversity issues. Another goal was to begin to move the leadership of these efforts into the hands of other members of the school system who have the expertise suitable to the efforts.

The Safe Schools Committee must also continue to strengthen the link between gay youth related issues and other important goals of the school system. Community members, educators, and administrators understand the importance of linking the efforts of the Safe Schools Committee with related issues, for example racial and gender equity goals. While there is some concern that joining with other issues may diffuse, or lose, the

focus on gay youth, there is also tremendous strength to be found in coalition with these "natural allies." An excellent example of this linkage is the connection of the Safe Schools Committee with the sexual harassment education program. Also, as presented in chapter two, there are many ways that the activities and goals of the national and local multicultural education movement could strengthen, and be strengthened by, such a coalition in this school system as well. By linking with other important values and goals of the school system there is increased opportunity to disseminate into the day-to-day life of the school information about the Safe Schools Committee, its resources and activities, and its goals.

In chapter four and five I have presented the context and processes of organizational changes in Selectown Public School District and Select High School related to the efforts of the Safe Schools Committee. I have also described at length the Safe Schools Committee, it's activities, and its contributions to systemic change. In the sections above this one, I have also detailed the perceptions of participants in the study of individual, school system, and school climate changes. Most recently, I pointed to four "next steps" for the Selectown Public School District and Select High School. In the next section of this chapter I offer a reassessment of Select High School's stage of multicultural awareness and the use of systemic-level interventions to address the needs of gay youth in their school system.

Select High School's Current Organization Stage of Multicultural Awareness and Place on the Continuum of School Change

The next part of this chapter is a reassessment of Selectown Public School District and Select High School related to the Multicultural Organization Awareness model and the Continuum of Change Strategies based upon the findings of this study.

The stage of multicultural organization awareness of Select Public School District and of Select High School did shift positively because of the efforts of the Safe Schools Committee. Gay youth issues have become more a part of the recognized "bottom line" of the school system. This is indicated by the changes noted by participants above related to individuals, the school system, and the school climate. The Safe Schools Committee has been particularly effective in gaining the involvement and support of key administrators, educators, students, and community members for their change efforts. Jackson and Hardiman (1988) describe stage two, the "club," as an organization whose mission, policies, norms, and procedures allow for a selected few "right" representatives from a targeted group. I described this school system as being in stage two at the beginning of the change efforts of the Safe Schools Committee because there were not demonstrable efforts to provide access for gay youth the full complement of resources and benefits of the school system. These changes, however, are more in quality of stage definition than in transitions between stages. Rather then hovering between "the exclusionary" and "the club stages," as it was in the beginning, it now hovers between the stages of "the club" and "the compliance" organization. The compliance organization is willing to provide access for gay youth in a variety of meaningful ways. As would be expected, this school system is on the cusp of the compliance organization more fully in some ways than in

other ways. There is still tremendous press on members of the school system to conform to the heterosexual norms and anti-gay language and behavior is exhibited regularly in the system. However, there are signals in the organization that there are changes underway. These signals include efforts to expand the definition of the school's mission, changes in policies, and shifts in formal and informal expectations and norms. Most importantly, many of the key leaders (although certainly not all) are in support of further changes. This commitment extends to the perceptions of key community stakeholders who perceive the school system to be changing in positive ways as well.

The Continuum of School Change Strategies is useful in describing how school-based change strategies related to gay youth issues are seen to interact with each other to contribute to systemic change (Ouellett, 1996). The model identifies a six-stage continuum from denial and avoidance to proactive commitment to systemic change. The Selectown Public School District and Select High School were described at the beginning of the Safe Schools Committee as being at the lowest level of intervention, "denial." Based on an analysis of the current change strategies used in this district, this school system made a significant leap to a current stage of "engagement." At this stage, gay issues are recognized as important to students, educators, administrators, and community members alike. Staff training and development is offered on an on-going basis and student organizations are supported. Members of the committee, administrators, and other educators understand the relationship of individual, school system, and school climate changes as working synergistically to meet the needs of gay youth. Also, a school system at this level is ready to publicly acknowledge and address gay youth issues as a component of both the social and curricular content in schooling. In many respects, this

organization shift most represents the efforts of the Safe Schools Committee to affect the daily lives of gay youth.

This section of the chapter acknowledges the transitions (and successes) of the Selectown Public School District and Select High School at the systemic level of organization change. First, I described how the district and high school have succeeded in establishing more comprehensive and interrelated intervention strategies to increase their stage level on the Multicultural Organization Awareness model. Next, I described the significant increase in the understanding and incorporation of mutually reinforcing and systemically-based intervention strategies such as described by the Continuum of School Change model.

In the final section of this chapter, I suggest seven key findings of the study. These findings are related to the systemic change initiatives of the Safe Schools Committee and best illuminate how the efforts of the Safe Schools Committee was able to encourage substantial institutional changes related to the school-based needs of gay youth within the Selectown Public School District and Select High School. These key findings may offer direction for other school settings interested in better understanding systemic change efforts related to gay youth issues.

Key Findings of the Study

The seven key findings of the study are offered in this final section of chapter five as a means of encapsulating the lessons learned from the study of Selectown Public School District and Select High School. I hope that by sharing these seven key findings the success I implementing systemic changes to meet the needs of gay youth in this

school setting can be shared with others interested in such efforts as well. The seven findings include:

1. the legacy of socio-historical events
2. organization norm of risk-taking
3. substantial program support
4. egalitarian value set
5. a stable subsystem for change
6. the intrinsic rewards for engaging in these initiatives
7. the role of serendipity and synergy in change initiatives.

These seven key findings are described at length in the body of chapter four and five and are restated briefly here.

Legacy of Socio-Historical Events

The legacy of socio-historical events can live on well after the event itself has passed from conscious memory. The analysis of this study's data indicated three events contributed importantly to the success of the Safe Schools Committee's change initiatives in the Selectown Public School District. The three included:

1. learning how to effectively respond to rapidly changing demographics in the school district
2. addressing the AIDS/HIV epidemic in a local context
3. installing comprehensive health education.

The experiences the school district had with each of these earlier events contributed an opportunity to clarify values, confirm important beliefs, develop and practice new skills, find useful organization change models, and effective management strategies.

Norm of Risk taking

The attribute of risk taking is important in organizations experiencing growth and change. It is possible that the description in chapters four and five make the change process sound smooth and linear, in fact it had lots of twists and turns. The educators, students, and administrators supporting the efforts of the Safe Schools Committee were universally described as risk-takers. They were willing to be challenged by new information, reassess their values and beliefs, and to change. As an intact subsystem the Safe Schools Committee was able to develop organization-wide support for their initiatives. For example, by providing multiple types of involvement (e.g., highly involved to minimally involved), collaborating with others (e.g., the sexual harassment education project), and respecting individual beliefs without allowing the program goals to be sabotaged (e.g., benign neglect of dissenters). As in the case of the two physical education teachers, efforts to act on shared principles, whether innovations were perceived of as being successful or not, were supported and rewarded across the school system. This openness to learning and risk taking also opened up the possibility of unexpected developments, what I refer to as the interplay of serendipity and synergy (described further later).

Substantial Program Support

The Safe Schools Committee received substantial support, financial and human resources, from the school system and the state Department of Education. There was top-down support in the school district, money, the talent of veteran educators, and commitment over time for these initiatives. The school system allowed five of its most veteran and highly skilled educators to dedicate their efforts to the committee over several years. The committee received mini-grants on an annual basis from the Massachusetts Department of Education Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students. This money allowed them to organize and implement a range of interventions that otherwise would probably have not been underwritten by the district's school budget. For example, this funding allowed the committee to bring in professional consultants, to develop large and small scale training activities, and to support student and teacher attendance at conferences, workshops, and forums. The committee made a little money do a great deal of work. The quality and extent of the committee's initiatives would have been seriously hampered if not for the support of this external funding.

Egalitarian Values Set

Key administrators, educators, students, and staff members shared a set of values I refer to as "egalitarian principles" and a strong commitment to action related to these principles. As described earlier, for example, these values included a belief in the importance of respect for all students, equity, and fair access to public education. The initiatives of the Safe Schools Committee were deliberately linked with important values already shared by key administrators, the school committee, parents, students, and teachers. As described in the story about "Tom," the principal, the behaviors modeled by

senior administrators encouraged other school system members to reflect on personal values and to relate them to the goals of the school system too. This facilitated the understanding across the organization that the goals and objectives of the Safe Schools Committee supported values important to the school district and high school whether or not they were controversial or appeared to succeed.

Subsystem for Change

The members of the Safe Schools Committee framed their effort from the beginning as a systemic change initiative. While they may have underestimated the amount of time and effort such a goal would require, they provided able leadership over an extended period of time. This continuity supported the development of a level of trust and synergy present when the goals and activities of individuals (e.g., the Safe Schools Committee) are enhanced and extended by the values and beliefs of the whole school organization (e.g., equity and fair access to public education) over time (Schmuck & Runkel, 1994). One example of the benefits of an intact, well-respected work group, such as the Safe Schools Committee, was their ability to successfully anticipate and meet many of the challenges to change in the system by collaboration, savvy management, and their skills with interpersonal relationships.

Intrinsic Rewards

Many of the students, educators, administrators, and community stakeholders in this study commented on their increased sense of being good people for supporting the change initiatives of the Safe Schools Committee. Some participants reported feeling personally "good" about their involvement. Others reported that this work made them

more energetic, provided renewal of their love of teaching, and convinced them that they were involved in initiatives that truly mattered in the lives of their students. The spiritual rewards, the sense of personal integrity, and the opportunity to live out deeply held moral principles (e.g., altruism) were also cited as important rewards.

Serendipity and Synergy

Serendipity and synergy played subtle roles in the success of the change processes at Selectown Public School District and Select High School. Change is rarely a linear process and the initiatives of the Safe Schools Committee were often supported by factors more related to serendipity and synergy than strategic planning. For example, it was by accident that the four educators went to the same training session and met each other. It was also by accident that the Department of Education Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students was such an exceptional consultant. He brought exactly the right facilitation skills to this group to help them coalesce as an effective subsystem. Another example of serendipity is the timing of the Safe Schools Committee came after the substantial and grueling effort to install comprehensive health education. The timing of these efforts also created a context for organization change wherein the school district had democratically decided that homosexuality was a topic that was appropriate for the school district's curriculum. Another example, the personal changes reported by "Tom," the principal, could not be planned for and, in fact, caught many participants by surprise. Many schools start first with social support and then work towards curricular inclusion. In the case of Selectown Public School District it was the reverse. The timing of change initiatives, the organization context within which the changes took place, and the skills and attributes of the members of the subsystem for change all acted synergistically to

impact the success of such efforts as those of the Safe Schools Committee. While you can not predict or plan for serendipity or synergy, you can remain open to it.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has described, based on an analysis of the data, indicators of what progress was made by the Safe Schools Committee in changing individuals, the school system, and the school climate of Selectown Public School District and Select High School related to gay youth issues. Reported improvements included such elements as increased sensitivity, availability of resources, policies, and support of key school system leaders related to gay youth issues. Gay and heterosexual students and adults alike across the organization perceived the efforts of the Safe Schools Committee to create meaningful changes as successful. Still, the data indicated there is much more that needs to be done, such as the four "next steps" that were offered above. A reassessment of the stage of multicultural organization awareness and the use of systemic change strategies offered additional indicators of both progress made and useful future directions. Finally, in an effort to summarize the "lessons learned," I offered seven key findings drawn from this study.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In chapter six I offer a summary of how the findings of this study relate to the theoretical foundations the study is based upon, an overview of selected conclusions drawn form the study, and suggestions for future research. The conclusions note that the findings of this study mark some progress within one school system committed to enhancing how they address the school-based needs of gay youth, however it also notes that much remains to be done. In the final section, suggestions for future research, six suggestions are made for useful directions for future research-based efforts.

Summary

This study brought together three streams of research and practice-based literature to examine the efforts of the Selectown Public School District's Safe School's Committee related to improving the school-based experiences of gay youth. As briefly described below, many of the findings of this study are consistent with the literature in each of these three streams.

The literature on gay youth and the findings of this study confirm that gay youth continue to be at risk of social and emotional isolation and school-based harassment and violence. This study also confirms that schools can play important, proactive roles in changing the experiences of gay youth for the better. As suggested by the current literature, addressing changes in educator and administrator training, school climate, curriculum, and the roles of community stakeholders are useful interventions. The findings of this study also underscore the important role that community stakeholders can

have in shaping successful school organization change processes. Additionally, both the literature and this study indicate the importance of linking change efforts related to gay youth with other important goals of the school system.

Schools reflect the broader national social context of values, attitudes, and beliefs regarding homosexuality just as they do related issues of diversity like race and gender. The literature related to multicultural education addresses the development of educational organizations that are socially just and that responsibly address the complex and diverse lives of students. Recommendations related to school change found in this field underscore the need for personal, as well as institutional, transformation and this is borne out by the current study as well. Changes indicated by multicultural education specialists include addressing formal policies, teaching strategies, formal curriculum, and instructional materials, as well as the behaviors, values, norms, and beliefs in the informal social climate. This study indicates that attention to all of these areas matters in making schools more inclusive and equitable for gay youth as well. While the needs of gay youth are not routinely included in the literature related to multicultural education to date, many of the changes called for in education settings by these theorists and educators would meet the needs of gay youth too.

Models offered by organization development specialists like Bolman and Deal (1991) and Schmuck and Runkel (1994) were useful in determining how effective the school system organization is currently or the degree of general organization readiness for change, respectively. This study confirmed the benefit of a broadly based press for change within the organization, the need for substantial support for change efforts, the usefulness

of a stable subsystem acting for changes, the importance of norms supporting collaboration between subsystems, and the crucial role of a spirit of risk-taking. Applications of multicultural organization development concepts and strategies to school settings have been limited, to date. However, where these applications have been made at the college and university level they have proven helpful. For example, in the development of staff training, student services, and library services, multicultural organization development theories and models offer useful strategies for school settings interested in understanding the correlation of the attributes of effective organizations and stages of multicultural awareness. The models offered by multicultural organization literature were useful in this study in marking organization changes related to understanding and responding better to gay youth issues. The systemic orientation of the multicultural organization literature was especially useful in understanding how interventions relate to each other and act synergistically to change individuals, the school system, and the school climate related to gay youth issues.

By exploring the contributions of the literature related to gay youth development, multicultural education, and multicultural organization development to school change efforts (like the Safe Schools Committee), I hope that gay youth will be better served by public school systems. Additionally, there is a need for a more complex understanding of how change happens in public school settings related to all issues of social justice and equity. By bringing the theoretical and practice-based literature of these three areas to bear on gay youth-related issues much can be done to improve the school experiences of all youth. More information is needed about decreasing prejudice, increasing respect and inclusion of all people, and implementing strategies that become an integral part of the

institutional fabric. Such efforts will serve to provide all students with a socially responsible and equitable public school experience.

Conclusions

The focus of this qualitative case study was to examine the experiences of one school system that was attempting to address the school-based needs of gay youth with organization-wide change initiatives. The purpose of the study was to offer one response to the call for models, strategies, and materials that support the efforts of subsystems for change, like the Safe Schools Committee, whose goal it is to change the school-based experiences of gay youth, as well as for all students. The study used qualitative research methods because,

> "qualitative methods enable us to explore concepts whose essence is lost in other research approaches. Such concepts as beauty, pain, faith, suffering, frustration, hope, and love can be studied as they are defined and experienced by real people in their every day lives." (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975, p. 5).

It is important to note that this study provides a "snapshot" that marks one place in the journey of a school system that has engaged in a variety of change efforts related to the school-based experiences of youth. In this study I examined nuances of the current change process addressing the experiences of gay youth. I described this school system's organizational context and stages of multicultural awareness prior to and then again during its participation in the Safe Schools Program. In this study, multicultural organization development related models became lenses for marking the progress of one district engaged in addressing gay youth related issues in the context of their school system.

The analysis of the data in this study indicated that it would be useful to explore how efforts to address gay youth-related issues could be better linked with other issues of social justice and equity. For example, issues such as race and gender and sexual orientation are all at play in the school setting. Currently, most school change efforts addressing these components of social identity work in isolation from each other. The experiences of the Selectown Public School District's Safe Schools Committee in working collaboratively with the sexual harassment program suggests the value of creating more sophisticated coalitions with others' projects. By working in coalition the goals of the Safe Schools Committee may become more closely linked with other important goals of the system and the sophistication of the change efforts increased. Collaboration may also avoid some of the challenges associated with change efforts such as the risks of increased resentment or a sense of competition between gay-related efforts and those of other targeted groups in schools. For example parents and students of color and lesbian, gay and bisexual issues or gender equity issues and lesbian, gay and bisexual issues.

There is much in this study that underscores the successes of the initiatives of the Safe Schools Committee, however, there is also much that points to the great amount of work left to be done. The experiences and perceptions of both the gay youth and adults in the Selectown Public School District and Select High School also indicate that their school system is at a crossroads of change and that there is still much to be accomplished. For example, the lack of broad student and adult-based leadership in these change efforts eloquently testifies to the degree of risk still associated with being lesbian or gay-identified in the school system. For example, I was surprised at how the voices of

students in this study were surprisingly muffled. Only three students and three educators were openly identified as lesbian. The focus group interview of students in the advanced placement English class certainly indicated that all students feel the high school setting is such a large and anonymous setting that everyone experiences a sense of isolation and alienation. In the focus group interview with members of the Select High School's Gay Straight Alliance, students were more shy and the dialogue more restrained than I expected. I think that this, more than any other indicator, illuminates the degree of risk most gay youth still feel in the school system and school climate. As I note the successes of these change efforts to date, I also note that they thrive with shallow roots in the organization. This highlights the deep on-going commitment necessary, both individual and organizational, to make real change in the lives of teachers and students and to institutionalize that change over time.

Suggestions for Future Research

The results of this study suggested six areas of questions that may provide useful direction for a variety of areas of future research. These areas include:

1. exploration of more complex training for educators and administrators (e.g., an emphasis on system-wide interventions and multiple issues of identity)

2. the development of appropriate learning goals and evaluation methods related to diversity topics such as gay related issues

3. an examination of the intrinsic rewards related to action for social justice

4. the roles of serendipity and synergy in school change processes

5. how related issues of diversity and social identity interact (e.g., race, gender and sexual orientation)

6. how the experiences of school districts engaged in systemic change efforts under different organizational conditions (such as organized community-based opposition to change efforts) vary from the study described here.

Training for Educators and Administrators

A further response to this study would be an exploration of how to support educators and administrators in developing and sustaining such change efforts in a more sophisticated and system-wide manner by building coalitions with like-minded others. For example, an indication of the shallow institutional "roots" of these change initiatives is that the current members of the Safe Schools Committee are ready to "hand off the baton" to another team however, new leaders appear slow to emerge. Some work of Safe Schools Committee is integrated with other important efforts in the school system already (e.g., the sexual harassment program). However, this certainly raises the question of how sustainable these changes would be if the current leaders of the Safe Schools Committee were to leave their roles on the committee. Such efforts at coalition might link the goals of diversity-related change efforts, provide peer support with each the projects of others, and encourage the sharing of useful strategies and models. Committee members would require support and leadership to develop these efforts especially if competition for resources and potential resentment is to be buffered. As future initiatives develop, it will be important to offer enough internal support to all change groups so that progress can be made on both individual and system-wide initiatives including identity specific programs and those that impact all aspects of students' lives.

Continued efforts are also called for in the development and implementation of a more sophisticated range of educator and administrator training. This enhanced training

might, for example, scaffold basic awareness training with related issues like systemic change efforts and development of links between these initiatives and other important goals of the school system. Support and leadership from key administrators early on is an important signal that this work is valued by the system. A broader range of training schemes would supplement concrete information with more "process" time to allow key leaders opportunity to rehearse behaviors and strategies of how to handle situations that are likely to be quite new for them.

The time available to most educators and administrators for such staff development is usually limited. Therefore, continued analysis to determine the most rewarding strategies for encouraging system-wide changes is suggested. This might include further examination of such components as the climate, curriculum, formal and informal cultural norms, and the underlying belief and value systems these reflect. One suggestion from this study that offers interesting directions for future research is the question of how to better assess the stage of organization readiness for change and to match to that appropriate intervention strategies.

Learning Goals and Evaluation Methods

The "bottom line" activity of school systems is the education of students. The development of learning objectives and outcome goals is essential for directing the next steps in curriculum innovations. Often educators assume "no news is good news" and this is understandable when established learning outcomes are difficult to locate for even mainstreamed multicultural education efforts in general. While this was not an evaluation study, questions were raised about how to evaluate the success of such change efforts in

school systems. For example, as we struggle to answer the question, "What should everybody know?" we must also consider how we can better evaluate student progress related to developmental learning goals. Currently, only the most general baselines are used such as counting the membership of the Gay Straight Alliance, or the number of "out" students and teachers there are in school. Multicultural education and multicultural organization development have strong leadership roles to provide for these areas.

Intrinsic Spiritual Rewards

Change models do not often talk about the aspect of spiritual reward for doing social justice and equity work. As this study unfolded, it became clear to me how enormously important it was for administrators to have to confront the dissonance raised between their values and the experiences of gay youth in the school setting. Related to this self-reflection, one of the surprising findings in this study was the consistency with which participants reported an increased sense of well-being, of being "better" people, and of doing feeling like they were doing "good work," related to their efforts in this area. This would be an important and useful arena for further exploration especially as it illuminates the link between personal transformation and altruistic behaviors.

Roles of Serendipity and Synergy

Most organization change strategies emphasize planned efforts, and many focus specifically on individual behaviors. The change efforts in this study were positively influenced by serendipitous events and this suggests a rich area for further exploration. For example, it was the serendipity of timing that the first introduction of gay youth issues into the school system occurred in a curriculum-based initiative approved by the

school committee (health education). However, this helped to establish the community support for the educators involved and it placed gay youth issues squarely on the table as an important education objective for the Selectown Public School District. Another example is the personal changes reported by participants were often perceived to be rather spontaneous and synergistic experiences rather than linear or logical ones. However, these changes prompted key leaders to act in ways that supported the efforts of the Safe Schools Committee enormously. Are there ways in which such changes might be encouraged, if not planned for?

Complex Social Identities

It is interesting from an organization development perspective to note that in this case study the general level or organizational readiness for change seemed to enhance the development of several concurrent change initiatives. For example, the installation of comprehensive health education and the sexual harassment education initiative also began in 1993, at about the same time as the start of the Safe Schools Committee. These initiatives were developed somewhat independently but acted to reinforce each other within the broader context of this school district.

Organization Readiness

This study examined the change processes of an exemplar school in an exemplar state. What would happen in a state without the support of the governor, the department of education or of more organized opposition emerged? For example, prior socio-historical events supplied a range of important experiences to members of the school system that prepared them to be more effective with these change initiatives. Future

research might usefully address how to integrate these initiatives in school settings that were less ideal. For example, how might these theoretical models be used to examine the experiences of change efforts related to gay youth in other school settings? For example, one without the support of key administrators or that experienced a lot of community-based resistance. It might also be useful to examine change efforts in a system with different leadership norms (e.g., not supportive of risk-taking) or in a less metropolitan area (e.g., a small rural school where there was no anonymity for students or adults).

The current Safe Schools Committee is already ahead of the standard of most public school systems for taking risks and addressing the needs of gay youth in the context of systemic change efforts. Their future program goals (such as those described above) supersede most of the support offered by the Department of Education Safe Schools Program for Gay and Lesbian Students. It will be important to discover ways to continue to cultivate these commitments to gay youth and change if the state funding system were to change or if community-based opposition were to emerge.

In conclusion, this study does indicate that transformative change is happening in schools and yes, there is hope. We see it here in the experiences of Selectown Public School District and Select High School. However, it is hard and it takes time. The work of this generation of leaders, both teachers and students, serves to inform the efforts of other school related change efforts. Perhaps this study will provide others with an example of resistance to social injustice and inequity and also one of hope that encourages others to find the courage to take such risks, as well as. Giroux has written that teachers and students do more then receive information, they also actively produce it

and mediate it (Giroux, 1983). He further suggests that power is located within students and teachers, as well as the dominant social context, and that students and teachers can, and in some cases do, resist school practices that marginalize or oppress some students. I wanted to see what was required for, and what happens when, students and teachers (and key administrators) work together within a school setting to address changes across a school system that resist dominant belief systems, in this case those regarding homosexuality.

In this school district educators, administrators, students, parents, and community members were inspired by the efforts of their Safe Schools Committee. They did take risks to learn, reflect, change, and act to make theirs a more socially just and equitable school. Schmuck and Runkel suggest that for an organization change intervention to take hold in a system that,

> "members must have some imagination about a better life at work and some daily evidence that they are capable of working together toward jointly-prized goals… The facilitator should ask, 'Is there some hopefulness here?'" (Schmuck & Runkel, 1994, p. 56).

I asked that question, "Is there hope here?" and used that definition of hope:

> "…not a devotion to abstract principle but rather the commitment to a dimension of human existence that offers meaning across differences; a finding of communities." (Tierney, 1994, p. 112).

The conclusions drawn from this study indicate that a systemic perspective can be critical in supporting school-based change efforts to meet the needs of gay youth and that addressing the needs of gay youth in school settings can make important contributions to increased multicultural awareness and organization development. For initiatives that

advocate for these kinds of changes to become effectively institutionalized in school settings they must include teachers, students, parents, parents, and community-based stakeholders. Additionally, for the school experience of gay youth to be improved, all aspects of the school organization must be addressed synergistically. I hope that this study contributes usefully to that goal.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

LETTER OF ACCESS

65 Ingersoll Grove
Springfield, MA 01109
(413) 747-7804

Select High School
454 Water Street
Selected, MA 01701

February 14, 1997

To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Mathew Ouellett and I am a doctoral student at the School of Education, University of Massachusetts Amherst. I am developing the research proposal and data collection stage of my dissertation, the title of which is "A Multicultural Organization Development Examination of School Based Change Strategies to Address the Needs of Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Students." It is my intention that this study will contribute directly to the literature on school change and multicultural organization development by describing how one high school in Massachusetts implemented systemic change strategies to address inclusion, social justice, and safety issues for students; particularly gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth.

Schools that are developing programs, like those recommended by the Massachusetts Safe Schools Program, offer a particularly rich opportunity for understanding locally the impact of national initiatives in multicultural organization development and school change. My research design is a single case study based on gathering descriptions of these kinds of change efforts at a Massachusetts high school. Select High School has been suggested to me as a school which has initiated a variety of programs related to the inclusion of all students and also as one which has experience with implementing recommendations of the Massachusetts Department of Education Safe Schools Program.

I am writing to you to request that Select High School consider being included in this study. Participation in the study will consist of allowing me permission to observe selected meetings and school activities, to review documents related to these same efforts,

and to conduct selected, voluntary individual interviews of school leaders (e.g., the principal, the superintendent, and teachers who emerge as influential).

This study will not incorporate any kind of broadly distributed research tool such as a survey or questionnaire. All student involvement will be of a group based nature. For example, permission to observe a discussion by students involved in the Gay/Straight Alliance would provide student perspective on school changes. All contact with student groups would be facilitated by an appropriate teacher or other adult sponsor and only occur with the consent of the principal.

The name of school and of all individuals in the study will be completely anonymous, both in the written report and in any presentations related to the study. In terms of the time commitment, it might be helpful to know that my plan is to conduct all data collection activities over the spring of 1997.

While this study is a description, not an evaluation, it may offer the school a helpful opportunity to pause, review, and reflect on their efforts to date. Therefore, at the completion of the research study I would be glad to share with you the information collected in a manner suited to their needs. For example, a presentation with a question and answer session at a faculty meeting might be helpful for sharing information, staff development, or future planning.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet personally with you if it would be helpful to hear at greater length about my research goals, or what participation in the study might entail. Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely yours,

Mathew L. Ouellett

APPENDIX B

PARTICIPANT CONSENT LETTER

A Case Study of School Change

I, _____ , agree to participate in a research case study on the changes that have resulted in my school setting based upon the school's participation in the Massachusetts Department of Education Safe Schools Program. The information obtained during this research will be used to write a case study description and submit it to the Graduate School, University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment for the doctor of education program. Aspects of the case study may be also presented at academic conferences.

I also understand and agree that this interview will be audio taped and transcribed by the researcher, Matt Ouellett. A copy of the transcription of the interview will be shared with me for my review, clarification, and comment.

The raw data collected for this study will not be made public, or available to the administration of my school. I may withdraw from this study at anytime by speaking to Matt Ouellett. All data collected from me will be returned immediately upon request.

The interview, audio tape, and the transcript will be held confidential. This will be done by screening all written materials identifying people, places, and school for anonymity. Any contributions that I make toward this research will be presented in a manner that will afford me, my institution, and other individuals mentioned anonymity.

_____

Participant

_____

Researcher

_____

Date

APPENDIX C

PARTICIPANT PROFILE QUESTIONNAIRE

What is your position and how many years have you been at this school?

What interested you in working with the Safe Schools Program in your school?

How long have you been involved with the Safe Schools Program committee at your school?

Please describe how your involvement with the Safe Schools Program (e.g., activities, committees, advising, etc.)?

Have you had any experiences or received any particular training for working with the Safe Schools Program (please describe what kind?, where?, and who sponsored it, etc.)?

Do you think you have personally been changed by your involvement with the Safe Schools Program? (Have there been any particular supports or barriers to these changes?)

What do you think your own "next steps" are going to be?

Have any specific activities of the Safe Schools Program been particularly successful at your school? Why?

Any particular failures? Why?

What do you think the "big challenges" are for the school now? Has this changed from before? Do you think it will be different in the future?

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Values: Goals Mission	What is the Safe Schools Program?
	How did you find out about it?
	What is it trying to do? (What are the goals?)
	Why do you think your school got involved in the SSP?
	Why did you get involved in the SSP?
	What keeps you involved?
Technology: "Hardware, software, peopleware"; how system works	What resources does the school offer on gay issues? How are they made available?
	Are there library resources? Counseling services? Health related?
	Are gay issues addressed in the curriculum? (Why? How? For example, textbooks or other teaching materials)?
	When are gay issues addressed and when are they not? (Context)?
	Have you seen changes in the school in how gay issues are handled in the curriculum? (Indicators?)
	What has the SSP accomplished, so far, in the school?(What hasn't been done?)
	Why choose these activities to pursue, as opposed to others? (Who decided?)
	Are there extracurricular activities for students or families related to gay issues? (Describe?)
	What kinds of training opportunities are offered for school personnel?
	Who gets included for it? How? When? Who doesn't get included? Why?

Structure: personnel	Is the climate healthy enough for those who wish to be "out" to do so? Are there gay, lesbian, and bisexual people in the school? (What are the indicators of this?) If not, what efforts are being made to change this climate? Are there adults that are "out"? (Why or why not do you think this is so?) What efforts do you think are being made to change this profile? (Are these efforts enough? What else should be done?)
Management: hiring, firing, promotion	What kinds of policies does the school have that are related to gay and lesbian issues? (e.g., Student Handbook, disciplinary codes or policies, policies for hiring/firing teachers?) Have there been any incidents involving gay issues at this school? (Describe) How are incidents handled? Is there a plan? How does information get communicated? Who gets involved? Who doesn't get involved? How important do you think the work of the SSP is to most others in the school? (What indicates this to you?)
Culture: organization climate	Describe what you the climate of the school is like now around gay issues? Why? (What are the indicators of this to you?) Describe what you think the school was like for gay youth before the school's involvement with the SSP? (Are there any particular indicators of this you can describe?) Is there name calling, graffiti, or stories about anti-gay harassment around the school that you know of? Has this changed over time? How? Have there been changes since then in why the school is involved? What indicates this to you?

Environment: interacts with others	How does the school interact with members of the greater community around gay issues? (For example, does the school invite in outside speakers or presenters on gay issues?) Are there support services for parents of gay and lesbian students? Is there a support group for gay and lesbian parents? How has the community supported the schools SSP efforts? (Why?) How has the community challenged the schools SSP efforts? (Why)
Bottom Line: delivery supports equity	Do the goals of the SSP support other important goals of the school? What are the "next steps" for your school? Why? If the SSP were successful, how would your school be different? What would indicate these changes?

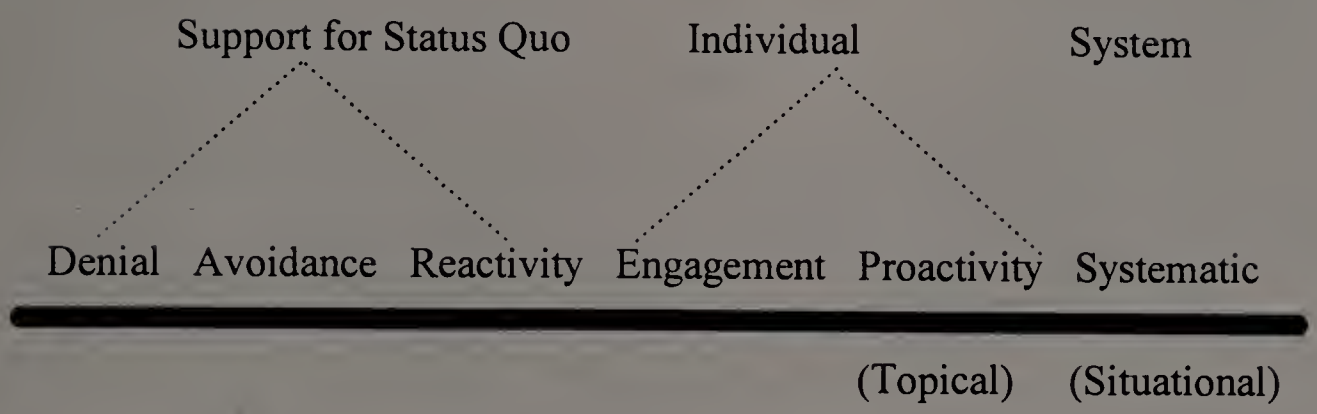
APPENDIX E

SAMPLE DIAGNOSTIC INDICATORS FOR ASSESSMENT

Indicator	Teachers	Students	Parents	Community
Values: Goals Mission	expression of support, participation	degree of violence, name calling	support via formal and informal means	collaborate with community resources
Technology: "Hardware, software, peopleware"; how system works	curriculum, teaching, and pedagogy materials e.g., library	formal and informal learning opportunities	public support for in school goals and projects	parents involved; programs and planning
Structure: personnel	"out" teachers, and formal training	"out" students, codes, policy and handbooks	support for G/S Alliance	parent support, e.g. counseling
Management: hiring, firing, promotion	employment policies, staff development	support from students for G/S Alliance	participation on committees or boards	consultants, presenters
Culture: organization climate	perceived by students to be approachable	perceived safety	perceived safety, counseling	support for in school efforts
Environment: interacts with others	relationships with community resources e.g., PFLAG	relation with community resources	parent groups, support for school	Department of Education and local community
Bottom Line: delivery supports equity	interactions in classroom discussions, adult peers	ability to apply concepts	access to in school programs	reports from stakeholder groups

APPENDIX F

A CONTINUUM MODEL OF SCHOOL CHANGE



Efforts to change schools to better meet the needs of gay youth are happening on a national scale. To better understand the scope and depth of these efforts it is helpful to understand the interrelationship of these initiatives as occurring along a continuum of types and levels of interventions as this model illustrates (Ouellett, M. L., 1996).

Denial: No reference is made to gay youth formally or informally in the school setting. Homophobia, heterosexism, and sexism are the normative values. No recognition of the presence of gay youth (or adults) in the school setting. A school setting at this level would be characterized by intense secrecy, overt denial of any behaviors which do not conform to gender role stereotype expectations, and the categorization of gays as immoral/perverted. Silence on issue of sexuality is actively endorsed. Nonconformists are punished. High Risk of violence. The Hetrick-Martin Institute/Harvey Milk High School in New York City is the direct manifestation of this level. Gay youth are literally forced entirely out of the school setting.

Avoidance: Overt references to sexual orientation are discouraged. Heterosexism is encouraged covertly and overtly in school setting. Gay youth are recognized as existing, however no resources are available. The individual is seen as the "problem." Some attempts may be made to help students assimilate by adapting gender stereotyped behaviors. If stress occurs, the individual is forced to leave the school setting by teacher and administrative inaction. Risk of violence is high, although some limited symbolic efforts at intervention/protection may be attempted. For example, Athol High School, MA during the early 1990s.

Reactivity: Homosexuality is seen as a "student issue," although staff training is offered administrative and teaching staff on one-time, topical basis. There are limited attempts to address homophobia (usually as a result of physical injury or harm) in response to specific situations. Gay students are seen as unique therefore resources offered are individualized (e.g., counseling, referral to outside agencies). Many high school systems fit this definition.

Engagement: Gay issues are recognized as important to a population of students, staff, and teachers. Staff and administrative training sessions are offered on an ongoing basis. Student ally groups are supported, as are public activities. Incorporation of gay issues into the curriculum and classroom based activities and discussions as appropriate. Proactive efforts are made to acknowledge and address needs of gay youth and gay teachers. The "message" in schools at this level, is that not only is it respected for students to be gay, but teachers and administrators are ready publicly and privately to acknowledge gay and lesbian issues. Schools at this level work with educating administrators, teachers, students, parents, and community members about gay issues in healthy, respectful ways. Some teachers are prepared to respond to inquiries about gay issues at least neutrally, and incorporate references to gays as appropriate to the curriculum and developmental levels of students. Selected examples of schools where both faculty and administrators, and students are "out" include The Project 10 in the Los Angeles Unified School District, Project 10 East, many schools with GLB Ally Support Groups.

Proactivity: A system wide effort is made to address the values, attitudes, and behaviors in the school setting of all members. Administrative processes, curricular goals, and materials are reviewed and enhanced to reflect stated values. Teachers are prepared to effectively address issues of homosexuality in age and discipline appropriate ways. Curricular materials reflect accurate portrayals of gays and their contributions to society. Staff role models, curricular images of healthy gays and lesbians are readily visible, as are print and video classroom and library resources. Mission statements, all policies and procedures for students and staff are reviewed and enhanced to reflect values of anti-oppressive schools. Cambridge Ridge and Latin School, Boston, Massachusetts is an example of this level of engagement.

Systemic Change: Gay issues are realized as part of broader social justice and equity issues. Efforts are made to educate the entire system, and to support an educational setting that is socially just and respectful of all members. Integration of training and interventions on an ongoing basis act to realize a sustained understanding of the interconnectedness of all forms of acts of prejudice and oppression, no matter the individual situation. The culture is strong enough to welcome challenges of high turnover, multiple forms of administration, active participation of a pluralist community, and the sharing of power and resources equitably. To date, I have not found a high school that fulfills this level of development.

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